

Minna

The Complete Revelations

by t. Winter-Damon

REX MILLER

THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS

by t. Winter-Damon

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(500 copies)

Number aah /

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ed by the Author

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`Signed by Rex Miller

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REX MILLER
THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The closer you get to Rex Miller, the more obvious it is you're nearing the eye of a creative cyclone of perhaps unequaled fury, a dangerzone where anything can happen, and probably will (if it hasn't already....).

I first encountered Rex's patented gonzo ballstothewalls kickdownthedoors&takenoprisoners brand of writing by accident (yeah, Pill-Grim, that's what's known as serendipity!). I received a reading copy of his premier novel, Slob, at the '87 World Fantasy Convention in Nashville, TN. I ended up doing a cover-to-cover read on the return trip en route to Tucson, AZ -- and, man, oh, man, what a t-RIP it was... toasting neurons by the handful, realizing I'd just had the privilege of a Close Encounter of the 6th Kind -- a head on collision with a writer who was gonna totally reshape consensus definitions and limitations of what horror and hardboiled detective/crime and suspense novels and techno-thrillers were all about... forever changing the shape of things to come...

I drafted some reviews of the book.

Some eventually saw print.

Some didn't.

I recall one of my own reviews seeing print in pal Randy Chandler's now-defunct Lil' Demon Review, a couple in England... I forwarded Xeroxes to Rex by way of his mail-order address...

I've never thought to ask him, but I kind of imagine Rex's mailbox was overflowing with hundreds like them. The small press was suddenly abuzz with news of this kickass new voice --

Killer Rex Miller -- all the major zines, too, reviews that gushed all over it or slammed it into the back court. But Slob's Chaingang put Miller on the M.A.P.--

Like Thomas Harris' Hannibal Lector, it was not the detective, Jack Eichord, but the villain, Chaingang, that captured the readers' imagination, for the most part because this was no two-dimensional, cardboard villain, this was a raging rhino of a serial killer unlike any we'd ever seen, and Miller opened his skull for us and let us see the seething psyche that motivated this very human/inhuman killing machine... a fully fleshed (no, that's NOT a Chaingang joke) character of legendary proportions (no again) that embodied the duality of the human monster with an immediacy not even Shelley's Frankenstein nor Stephenson's Jeckyl/Hyde ever had... Slob, Miller's first published novel, garnered a finalist status with HWA's Stoker Awards, and rave cover blurbs from a host of genre luminaries, such diverse and highly respected voices as Harlan Ellison, Stephen King, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Graham Masterson, J.N. Williamson, and a host of others....

From that first book, like most of you, I'm sure, I'd taken that first, fatal bite, and I was now a charter Miller Maniac, caught hook, line and sinker....

One thing led to another. I drafted reviews of Rex's other books, as they were released. Most were raves. But not all were (more, later). I called "em as I saw tem, right or wrong. I sent him copies of all of them, I think, Some of them never saw print, for all those -- if-anything-can-go-wrong-it-will Murphy's Law reasons that seem to plague the genre press -- My pal and frequent collaborator Randy Chandler (and frequent reviewer for the Atlanta Constitution-Journal, whose blurbs have appeared on Stephen King's books and those of Peter Straub, to name but two "heavy hitters") and I were invited to do a "Year's Ten Best Books of 1990" i, genre publication. Not one, but de our list -- Slice and Iceman (along ii choices as Ramsey Campbell's Ancient

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Images, David Lindsey 's Mercy and Peter Straub's later-award-winning Houses Without Doors -- yeah, we cheated, it was a COLLECTION not a NOVEL. So what?) The name of the article was Outlaw 's Input. Publishing schedules went haywire, and Outlaw's Input never appeared...

Along the way, I was lucky enough to become friends with Rex and I learned a few things about this writer who's chainsaw carved his niche as the rattlesnakemean, ultrahip, hardboiled Killer Miller. But he's far more than that. To those of us privileged to call him "friend," he's universally regarded as one tough guy with a (not-so-well-hidden) heart of pure gold, with a devastatingly encyclopedic knowledge of pop culture trivia, and, when not dealing with the very serious nature of his personal cause celebre, he's one funny dude, a bit like Wolfman Jack meets Don Rickles and Robin Williams...

Our standing joke, whenever I phone Rex, replays like this: "Hell, Rex, it's been almost a week since I talked to you last, how many new books have you finished, and how many dozen stories have you sold...?" (On a slow week I get writer's cramp jotting down all his latest updates!).

So, it seemed long overdue for a major Miller retrospective /interview/atrocity exhibit--

And, thanks to Stan Tal's being yet another member of Miller Maniacs Anonymous (Sorry! Guess I blew that, huh, Stan?), he agreed to put together this very special, limited-edition project!

Well, let's get to it.

Kick back, flip open the pages of our REX MILLER: THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS file, and get the inside line on the HOTTEST NAME IN HARDBOILED....

As for satori? Read on, Grass-Hopper, and experience true enlightenment:

--t. Winter-Damon
Tucson, Arizona
03 March 1993

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TUNING IN TO STATION K.L.L.L.

If, by some bizarro, freak/geek twist of fate, you haven't stumbled into that blood-drenched Psycho Zone called KILLER REX MILLER TERRITORY yet (yeah, and you call yourself a Horror Fan...? and/or a follower of crime novels and hardboiled detective...? what'd y' do, just wake up from longterm deeptank/deeptranked CR YO-FREEZE...? maybe a forty-year coma, and y' think Mickey Spillane's J, the Jury is still SOTA stuff...? or Dirty Harry's still the baddest ass around...?), then, O Pill-Grim on those written paths of sex'n' death, boot up yer brain, Babycakes, ' cause the first one may be Free, but it's always the Hardest...

ZAP. Or ZIP.

No middle ground.

Killer Miller's jazzriff/jive hip/flip prose style is gonna either wire y' or tire y', shock yt n' rock y' or coldcock y'....

He's the Splatter-lit equivalent of wrestling 's Rowdy Roddy Piper -- madcap, outrageous and totally unpredictable...

But you're gonna KNOW you were there... down, down into dimensions of vicarious psychotic bliss beyond Thomas Harris, James Ellroy, the Michael Slade Consortium, the wildest rantings of the SPLATPACK (in the dust, babies, eat his dust!), Brett Easton Ellis' American Psycho (O pale pale shadow of MILLER MANIA....).

Here 's a couple of major quotes of note (not countin' those 1001 cover blurbs by genre luminaries....) you just MIGHTA missed:

"Like James Ellroy, Jim Thompson, and Andrew Vachss, Rex

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Miller has turned the mystery novel inside out with unflinching focus on the seamy, the sordid, and the pathological. Miller is the most uninhibited of the group... typically writing stripped-down, brutal prose... obviously influenced by Hemingway."
--Paul M. Sammon (essay, "Outlaws," in Splatterpunks).

HOT AS A PISTOL... FIVE SKULLS! (Top rating employed by cover story, Murder, They Wrote: Serial Killers By The Book,

Eight Novels that are red all over.") "Warning: Do not read after eating. Ripe, gory, unapologetically gross introduction to the popular, pulpy Jack Eichord series. B-PLUS..."

--Mark Harris, Tina Jordan , Entertainment Weekly, May 31, 1991.

Outrated (Hell, read: BLEW 'EM OFF THE MAP...) Mary Higgins Clark (D) and Bret Easton Ellis (F). (Just barely beaten for Best-o'-the-Best by Thomas Harris' legendary Red Dragon, A-MINUS, and The Silence of the Lambs, A!)

(Chaingang) shows us that there is a little monster in every human, and a little human in every monster. We haven't seen writing this strong and jarring since the late Jim Thompson at his best."

--Ray Garton, controversial author of Live Girls, Crucifax, Lot Lizards, and Dark Channel.

"Rex Miller is a writer with power, imagination, humanity, and scope; and his latest novel is compelling and engrossing from page one... I did find myself rooting for Chaingang... he's an incredible fictional (I hope!) creation who makes Hannibal the Cannibal look like he's on Weight Watchers!"

--Rick Hautala, bestselling author of Nightstone, Dark Silence, Cold Whisper, Winter Wakes, and Little Brothers, etc.

"Chaingang makes Hannibal Lector look like Mr. Rogers..."

--R. Patrick Gates, Dell Abyss author of Tunnelvision.

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"An unflinching, ground zero look at how child abuse builds monsters the way no recombination of DNA ever could... all the more terrifying for its core of truth."

--Andrew Vachss, noted crime writer, attorney and child's rights advocate.

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Miller's gonzo career, Buy an extra copy: Turn a friend on, share the rush and get 'em hooked...

tw-D: A number of friends have mentioned they were a bit confused about what happened to Chaingang between the finale of Slice and the events that take place in your latest novel, Chaingang. Can you give us any clues?

REX: I really can't because it would give away the plot to an upcoming story. "Kowloon" is one of my personal favorites among the Chaingang stories. I wrote it long ago, and at one time considered doing it as a stand-alone chapbook, but due to the hiatus of my publishing schedule when I moved from NAL to Pocket, the story will be out of sequence when it comes out. It's the 20,000-word novella that explains the missing components of the Eichord-Chaingang connection. "Kowloon" links the end of the novel Slice with Chaingang's reemergence, and reveals the secret bond between Eichord and Bunkowski. It's the lead novella in Rich Chizmar 's first Thrillers anthology, which features four 20,000-word pieces, published by CD Books. Joe Lansdale does the forward, with other novellas by Chet Williamson, Nancy Collins and Ardath Mayhar.

Iceman, Rex Miller. Onyx Novel. November 1990. 283 pp., \$4.50 (pb.) ISBN 0-451-40223-5.

Better take a long, deep breath. Do a quick reality check. Center firmly on your sense of SELF. Scan all the internal gauges. Drain the oil'n'water. Replace with 10W50 and blizzard-rated antifreeze. Clear the room of firearms, flatware, and hammers. Unplug all those power tools (PREFERABLY, DISASSEMBLE...) Leave nothing loose with cutting edge or point. Slip off that leather belt and drawer it... It's a total lockdown in Ward 39.6 (Law of Averages makes this one as callforwarding for The Number of The Beast...). Put the thought police on full alert. 'Cause Uncle Rex is about ready t' tuck y' in and turn y' out, TAKE Y' ALL THE WAY OVER THE EDGE THIS TIME, ALLTHEWAY DOWN

THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS

INTO PSYCHO CITY... Yeah. 'Cause Jack IS back.
And The ICEMAN cummeth:

There is a single eye. An eye alone. This eye watches from the darkness, seeing nothing yet seeing much. If, indeed, it IS an eye, what does it see? From its vantage point it sees shapes, Strange outlines, large, shadowy forms, the familiar look of a room. An eye. One eye by itself. Cyclops.

Darkness in the room. The eye has no ears, so it cannot hear the detective on the wooden stairs, wirecutting tools snapping the wire, breaking the police seal of a crime scene, fumbling for a set of keys. Inserting one. Clicks. Pause. Inserting another. Metal pressure. Movement.

Cyclops sees a frightening sight. A blinding rectangle of the brightest light smashes into view.

A bright, dazzling opening of light in the dark outlines of what the eye sees.

A man's fearsome silhouette is framed in the brightness. He is only a large, looming black form in the center of the light. He enters, stumbling. Hand slapping the wall. Fumbling for something. Pause. Another stab into Cyclop's field of vision.

The unseeing eye, if indeed it IS an eye, might see the stabbing brightness of a flashlight beam shooting into the black, sweeping a spot on the wall as the detective finds the light switch.

The flashlight blinks off and the room is bathed in electric light. The interior of a mobile home. Yet not ordinary at first glance. The initial impression of something extraordinary is enhanced by the smell. The stench of the abattoir. The hideous, nauseating stink of the killing fields. The foul and lingering odor of the

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hasty burial ground. It attacks the nostrils in a merciless wave of stinking horror that hammers the olfactory sense.

Cyclops watches over this hellish place: 1458 1/2 (Space G) South Utica.

The first thing Jack Eichord sees...

(Drop that \$4.50 down on the counter and find out for y'rself, Pill-Grim....)

..And then he sees the rest of it and his heart cries.

Miller's finest (book) yet. Lean. Mean. And obscene. Narrated in his trademark hip/flip dialectic of induced psychosis. Fastforward structuring of eyeblink, info-byte, jumpcutting chapters that pass by like the throb of whiteness fever. His sense of presence is awesome, hallucinatory-vivid. Zen brushstrokes on a perverse canvas of tanned human skin

in the pigments of inhuman pain and mortal suffering...
Boschian Hellscape of transcendent terror and despair
intruding into the space/time continuum of Middle Amerikan
mundanity: Buckhead and Moss Grove and Mt. Olive (GA? --
hhhhmm, since when is GA "midwestern": see page 28 of
Slob, where "Buckhead" is referred to as "his midwestern
city?"); Blytheville, AK; the mountains of NM; Las Vegas, NV;
Amarillo and Vega, TX:

It reminded him of the deep South, where you
can drive through residential neighborhoods and
tall, centuries-old magnolias spread out over the
traffic like the elm-shaded side streets of the 40s,
before the national Dutch elm blight hit southern
and Mid-America. It was like that here. Big,
unkempt trees drooping out over the highway.

A sign assured motorists JESUS LOVES YOU
and then another that JESUS DIED FOR YOUR

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SINS. Somebody had painted on the side of an
underpass: TRUST JESUS. Eichord passed an
elderly gentleman in a slow-moving station wagon
sporting a bumper sticker telling you to HONK
IF YOU LOVE JESUS. The phrase "Bible Belt"
came to mind.

But this wasn't the Bible Belt. Perhaps it was
below the belt, he thought as he drove by large
stone abutments that looked like a mini-acropolis,
once the supports for a massive loading dock.
The compress for the cotton bales was long gone,
and so in fact was the railroad that once hauled
the cotton away. The gin was vanished. He
passed shacks for migrant workers and signs
advertising Rummy Cola, Brad's Truck Broker-
age, and Velma's Salon. All rust-covered.
Green frog-colored lily pads floated in stagnant
roadside water. Joe's garage and muffler shop.
Closed. Ivy's Café. Empty. NO TRESPAS-
SING.

A creek runs along besides a wooded area.
The creek is banked by low-hanging willows,
water lilies, thousands of cattails, goldenrod,
water weeds of every description. An un-
derground cable sign has all but rusted away, so
that the only thing you see is the bold word
WARNING.

The vestiges of a ghost town without optimism
or hope. A forgotten chunk of America not even
the most hypo realtor could get excited about. A
storm had flung mighty oak limbs into the two
lane and nobody cared. He could tell they'd
been in the way of traffic for a while as he
slowed and navigated his way around the partial
roadblock.

Prosperity had fled. Storefronts were clogged
with broken roll-top desks, legless or seatless

CC SSEEOD'SSS«S

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tW-D: Rex, whatd'y' mean you're not writing to entertain?
REX: The short stories, sure, I'm playing with my dick and
stuff, but the books are basically a message. Two things: IF
YOU FUCK WITH KIDS YOU MAKE MONSTERS, AND IF
YOU ABUSE THE HELPLESS, I HATE YOU! I suppose
I'm trying to get rid of the poison... I'm not sure if that's as
strong a message as I'd like to send. THAT'S WHY I
POUND OUT IN-YOUR-FACE NOVELS, THAT CAN'T
HELP BUT MAKE IT CLEAR HOW IMPORTANT THESE
THINGS ARE TO ME...

Sure, I want to be liked and admired same as anyone else,
but maybe this is suspended when I'm writing.

THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS 11

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WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM:
MAJOR NEWSFLASH ON RECENT HAPPENINGS

1992 saw a number of major events. In November, publication by Pocket Star Books of his seventh published novel, the much-acclaimed Chaingang, which "sold through" almost immediately. The sale and release of dozens of new short stories and novellas, as well as non-fiction articles AND another non-fiction book, humorous vignettes, and other pieces of writing. Collaborative projects with another very well known hardboiled detective writer, Andrew Vachss. A change of agents, after his long association with mega-agent Richard Curtis. And...

tW-D: With sales of your books nearing the million-copy mark, Rex, your novels have been picked up in several foreign markets for reprint. Could you give us a rundown on the details?

REX: Sure, there's Pan Horror in the U.K., Bastei Lubbe in Germany, Arnoldo Mondadori Editore and most recently Telemaco in Italy, and Kobunsha in Japan. Tal is marketing Iceman through Baziat in Russia -- I understand he's offering it for 500 Rubles and an antique KGB nutcracker.

tW-D: Novel-wise, 1992 saw the release of Chaingang, switching publishing houses from NAL (who published your first six novels) to Pocket Books, as their lead book for November -- yet another blockbuster saga of your now-legendary character Chaingang (Daniel Edward Flowers Bunkowski), What other books can we expect to see forthcoming?

CC EEEEEDEE''!SSS~ 01

= t. WINTER-DAMON

REX: Savant, scheduled for 1994, with Butcher to follow. A third book is in the first-draft stage.

tW-D: I know you had some early nibbles and teasing lovebites on movie deals for Slob, but nothing you felt comfortable could do the scope of the character and story full justice. Do you have any updates on Prospective movie deals we could mention here?

REX: Sure -- if you don't think you'd smother in the latex suit.
tW-D: Duh. Not personally that desperate for bigtime stardom,
yet, but thanks -- sounds like one a' them user-unfriendly,
Freunds/Jon Belmonte/Blue Kriegal-network specials,..?
REX: All BS aside, after numerous earlier overtures by the film
industry, my character CHAINGANG is on the threshold of
being OPTIONED FOR FILM!

tW-D: Rex, can you give us any insider info on some of those
earlier offers you refused, and, more importantly, any details
about the cinematic debut of Daniel Edward Flowers
Bunkowski? Or is this new deal still pretty hush-hush...?
REX: Until I sign a contract on it there's no deal, and J
haven 't signed anything as we speak. Without reflecting on any
ongoing negotiations, we've had two firm offers and three or
four nibbles for option/production deals and development deals
since Slob was first published in 1987 - including a
\$10,000/\$150,000 production deal by a theatrical producer in
1987 -- all of which we declined.] would not give my character
away then and I still won't, If people want a development deal
for cable, a theatrical deal based on the character only, or just
a straight option of a book, I'm open and I'm not
unreasonable.

"You get one Chaingang, maybe two, in a writing career --
if you're one of the lucky ones," one of the top writers told
me. I don't doubt that wisdom. I do want fair compensation --
it's that simple.

"CHAINGANG" (TM)
IS A TRADEMARK OF REX MILLER

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IV

KILLER REX MILLER:
THE MAN BEHIND THE LEGEND

We were rapping, earlier, about preconceived mental images
readers may have formed, right, Miller Maniacs?
ember. ction...
rh neal generally is far friggin 4 ag ag arr
: : 6
For one thing, born 25 April, 1939, Res
"official" Splatterpunk (see the review of his DS athena
Sammon's Splatterpunks antho, later, bab a oe
Psycho's Bob Bloch and mutual Pe J .N. ey wy mre
i i aim to o
both have paid their dues to earn ac 8 casas
kid gloves, these la

-status (when they take off the
 Porieecel re "leather elbow patches set" can walk the oie
 and talk the talk of the baddass Sate ier eal the = a
 or Wild Bill Burroughs, :
 cy eat he ATTITUDE, trust me, Babycakes r= a.
 coors seen Gentleman Jerry hold his own aeieate:
 Rercait tagteam Cleanup crew of S&S, yeah, pun
 boys Craig & John....). ;
 ie cultatated Killer Miller is a Se _ PROFILE
 S:
 -ACHIEVER, a master of many talen
 B Collectng the by-products of juvenile cde boo i
 e >
 of his life from as early as he can rem g
 otha complete library of the Hardy Boys books, as oe on
 remiums and BLBs. In his teen years, while wor B ata
 Mutaal network station, he taped all the radio episo
 favorites such as The Shadow.
 is "official" bio: ;
 wae a tap-rated metro-market radio personality for fifteen

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t. WINTER-DAMON

years, Rex was heard over radio I

pie stations owned b
 Magune pearl: Company, Balaban, Cap Cities, Reus
 ree 4 Ee inatra (Dena Pictures), McLendon, Scripps-
 ee ane _ er major broadcast chains. He worked in eve
 in Chieags at ` wn ne Jazz in St. Louis, over KWK, to all tall
 ms Re ea . Over forty radio job offers included
 Reta eae s prestigious WNEW, and Los Angeles!
 veri an inthe ee ated ae "best in his time

nd " ; as rate i

ane disc jockey personalities by a major musie nies -
 Bow ae 60s, Rex sold a parody of Ian Fleming 's James
 ee mea to a number of companies, These were
 fhiaighaut neo and on the air. The series appeared
 pee ae ae -9. as a radio series in such markets as Dallas
 cee rmats allowed for brief "featurette spots," and
 ae ae internationally. The Adventures of James
 Vucme ec = m a wide variety of world markets from
 fmoe ~ - i ip Freeport, Grand Bahamas, including bein
 eae Bt 7 fo radio station, Radio London which
 Estuary -- within one ed a ae ames
 (Rex drew on this in creati ialeaupciea ee
 as Pirate Station, "KILL via ag ,

ao later in this book). In print, this seciae me
a ee numerous venues, including On Her Majesty's
Plasboy Ui = me in Swank Magazine... An ill-fated "sale" to
a. ee itor who picked it out of the slush pile died in
Pillows a shortly after telling Rex he'd use it the
ee aa il "if (he'd) clean it up a bit and resubmit"), led
leicndie TW) andi ley Gee at humor or fiction
Ellison encouraged Killer Miller oe f 7 ae ia

(THANK YOU, HARLAN!
3 : ! FROM MILLER
VERYWHERE!!! -- MAY YOUR CAMEL 5 HUME

NEVER RUN DRY!
YOUNG! ! AND MAY YOU STAY... FOREVER

THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS 15

Continuing his early fascination with radio-heroes (yeah, and one may suspect even more so those notorious villains... Dr. Fu, Moriarty, the Dragon Lady, and a host of deliciously wicked archfiends of the serials....), during this period, Rex constantly scoured the Oldtown collectibles shops for old premiums, toys, comics, art, posters, and character memorabilia of every type....

In 1966, he was the national voice of Dodge Cars, and has a long list of blue-chip agency/account (most obtained from the Chicago and Dallas areas -- locales he's used to good effect in his various novels) credits as a freelance announcer, including: Patio Frozen Foods, Commercial Traveler's Insurance, Frigiking, Manor Bread, Western Banks, William Penn Cigars/General Cigar Corp., etc, etc...

Rex also did some film promo work. His "Birdman of Alcatraz" trailer was produced by FILMCUE, Inc., in N.Y. He also worked on several United Artists' releases while working for The MacLendon Corp.

He sold two variations (30 and 60-minute screen adaptations) of a teleplay to William Holden's production arm, Lee Segal Productions. These were based on Frank X. Tolbert's novel, Bigamy Jones. Regrettably, the TV program never went into production, although the book was later re-adapted as a theatrical film release (Rex wasn't involved in this work).

He spent a year or two paying the bills as a tech writer (extremely demanding and intense work, converting a mass of facts and figures into concise, user-friendly form....), drafting prospectuses, designing commercial presentations and brochures, and, eventually, entire training programs, including Manpower Services and the 1970 General Electric Training Program for Computer Grade Capacitor Technicians. Rex

credits tech-writing with having taught him to outline, something junior college never did.

With extensive experience in radio acting, and wanting to obtain as much work as possible in the Chi-Town area, he began making the "cattle calls," those infamous mass auditions for freelance talent. This landed some lucrative work, among many others, Inland Steel, but Killer Miller soon realized there

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were easier ways to make a living...

On 21 January 1971, he said farewell to radio, and entered the mail-order memorabilia business full time.

Rex's areas of Special interest include: oldtime radio premiums and programs, movies and serials (in pre-video 16mm film format), posters, comic books and strips, various character

: .

by-products such as toys and games, first editions, Signage,

Americana, and nearly any other shippable nostalgia merchandise. (So whatcha waitin' for? Redeem your sordid, miserable lives thru a waycool collectin! hobby.... For order info contact: Rex Miller, Route 1, Box 457-D, East Prairie, MO 63845, and be sure to enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope -- PLEASE!)

As a sideline, Rex authored approximately thirty pop-culture publications, including: Archives, Comic Heroes Illustrated, Radio Premiums Illustrated (12 volumes), Radio Thrillers Illustrated,

various others. He also contributed to such publications as RBCC. (an early fanzine for which he wrote a regular premium column), Collector's Weekly, and The Antique Trader (a widely-read trade publication which bought and serialized his first non-fiction book, Collectibles: The Economics of Dealing -- portions of which were picked up by the major networks, over 100 newspapers, and garnered him a feature article in The New York Times Sunday Magazine). A contributor to The Antique Trader for 21 years, Rex still has a series running there. He

recently completed and sold a second non-fiction book, titled, The Magic World of Mail Order Selling, this one based on the papers, Shelbyville, KY, and available for \$10, payable to The Antique Trader, P.O. Box 1050, Dubuque, IA 52001).

Killer Miller continues in mail order -- with customers almost everywhere in the free world -- as well as with his fevered output of fiction writing, Rex's Most recent catalog of rare video and quality collectibles, Sherlock Holmes & The Rum

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THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS

Soaked Crooks, 120 pgs., fully illustrated, video, etc., and aa or the Menwiles, 120 pgs. of comic art and a bes nae illustrated -- the pair for \$10 postpaid... (

.
EX (ta trademark, ultra-suave aod davatee TF senten ing back to those tube-warme days /daz ste] year): Jeet tear the top off YOUR mailman and send it in

today!

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WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM, AGAIN:
ANOTHER MAJOR NEWSFLASH

tW-D: I know a lot of your longtime fans will be shocked to learn you've parted ways with your now-former agent Richard Curtis. You were friends for some years. He's very successfully represented you for the six-book deal with NAL (five books in the Jack Eichord series plus your actual first book, the DECIDEDLY BIZARRE Vietnam saga, Profane Men), as well as your three-book deal with Pocket Star Books. What prompted the change in representation, and who is agenting you, now, Rex?

REX: I was repped successfully -- as you point out -- by Richard Curtis, and consider him both a friend and a brilliant teacher. I left because of his constant whining about the Pentecostal

Church. Ever since he converted he's been intolerable on that one issue, incessantly lecturing writers about the advantages of the Pentecostal faith. He's reached the point now where he's only taking on Pentecostal writers and, any day now, I fully expect to hear that Janet Daley has begun speaking in tongues. I wish you hadn't brought up this ugliness... are you happy now, Demon? Seriously, though, I only left because sometimes you need a fresh roll of the dice. I was fortunate in having several well-respected agents who had expressed interest in my work, and I chose Martha Kaplan, a former editor at Knopf who had been Executive Editor of The New Yorker, and had formed The Martha Kaplan Agency. Her address is 110 W. 86th St., New York, NY 10024.

tW-D: Does she happen to be Pentecostal?

REX: Only in the broad cultural sense.

EEE EES: ~~~

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VI

THE NOVELS
AND SOME INSIGHTS INTO THEIR GENESIS

O.K. If you've already done Rex, if you're no Virgin at the Altar of Stone Cold Insanity waitin' for the ultimate one-nighter (read, Pill-Grim, READ....), then maybe it's time to say goodbye to the sugarcoated dayworld of consensus "Dark Fantasy," then maybe you're ready to take the deathtrip allthwaydown inside that mental Mindanao Trench, the SLAUGHTER FIELDS OF MAGUS MILLER--

Slob, Rex Miller. Signet Horror, November 1987. 301 pgs., \$3.95. ISBN 0-451-15005-8.

Slob is a mind-blowing, brain-bashing beauty of a novel, an incredibly powerful tour de force from ace entrepreneur and expert on movie/radio/ comix-melodramas, Rex Miller, and the cinematic influence (and the intense and colorful imagery of the comix medium) is strong in Miller's visualization of events and characters. At times, they seem to burst forth from the pages in frame-by-frame reality, the sight and sound and smell and taste a tangible presence that shakes you to the gut and drags you down into a very special Hell inside the mind of a 500-Ib. psycho-killer that rips humans apart like dolls and eats their still-throbbing hearts.

Catch the fevered immediacy Miller typically invests in this onward-rushing, deliberately run-on sentence/paragraph:

The impression is that of an unexpectedly graceful clown bear, agile fat man, dainty jumbo dancer, XXX-L shirt billowed like a sail or a moving tent, suggestions of agility and power,

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balance and an odd buoyancy, as the treetrunk legs move the great weight of body toward the house in massive, unstoppable effort, the big man's compass needle drawn by the magnetic pull of a human heartbeat.

Slob is not a book for the timid. If you open up and flow with its dialogue, its narrative of inhuman, frenzied lustmord, Miller will rip open the serial slayer's skull and let you tumble in the mental abscess, feeling through Daniel Edward Flowers Bunkowski's senses, feeling the essence of this man/monster, known as "Chaingang":

But then on the other hand, there are some deaths so ignominious and awful that we shudder at the nightmare suggestion of such an end. Some deaths seem designed to kill you again and again, taking you by inches, letting you contemplate the moment when life's flame winks out as you cringe in screaming, fearful terror. The woman in the field was about to die one of those death's. Not the worst imaginable by any means, but a brutalizing shocker to someone pampered and protected and -- like most of us -- isolated from the cruelties and depredations of street life.

At first it appeared that he had no dick, she thought to herself, irrationally, in the frightening perplexity of the moment. She thought "thing" not dick, but all the same. It wasn't enough that she was about to be raped and murdered and perhaps even tortured brutally by this hideous, waddling mastodon of a madman, this fat, stinking horror that had suddenly overturned her life, but to be assaulted by some prickless FREAK only added to her overwhelming nausea, terror, and discombobulation.

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The good-looking, youngish brunette, nude, flat on her back, terrorized to the point of paralysis, stared wide-eyed at the huge, gross figure that hovered above her as she lay helpless on the rough blanket. He was enormously fat, a moving mound of flesh, and as he stood there slobbering over her, he did indeed appear to have no penis. He was the one they had built that Vietnam spike team around, the one called CHAINGANG.

Actually Daniel Bunkowski's genitalia was normal, perhaps even slightly larger than average, but his sex was covered by cascading rolls of fat that encircled his gut like ugly, rubbery truck tires.

tW-D: Let's take a quick aside here, Rex. This intense level of sexual explicitness is rarely seen in mass-market paperback. My first read on this kind of punched me back in my seat, thinking I couldn't remember anything this extreme in modern horror fiction since the infamous Devil's Kisses and More Devil's Kisses, edited by "Linda Lovecraft: (actually, Mr. Michael Parry, if memory serves me correctly), published and confiscated/condemned in the U.K. back in what...? '76 & '77...? and two pieces that immediately come to mind from Dennis Etchison's Cutting Edge antho (Doubleday, '86) -- Karl Edward Wagner's Lacunae and Roberta Lannes! Goodbye, Dark Love, both instant classics. Since the release of Slob, we've seen more of an opening up in this area -- Ramsey Campbell's excellent Scared Stiff (Scream Press), and Jeff Gelb's Hot Blood, Hotter Blood, Hottest Blood anthos (you've contributed to all three), some of the work by Dave Schow and Joe Lansdale... Did you experience any problems with selling your publisher on what you were doing with your gonzo brand of erotic terror, and how much censorship have you encountered, to-date?

REX: Now you've asked the crunch question, a serious question, not as it relates to me but to my betters. Since my

24 t. WINTER-DAMON

bettters ain't here, however, let me tackle it: I was censored continually and mercilessly and unilaterally for two decades of radio and vowed I'd never let it happen again, which is essentially why I didn't pursue the career in television that was offered to me again and again on every level. Remember that my contemporaries were Lenny Bruce and Redd Foxx -- to name funny guys from both ends of the spectrum. I was on radio, however, not working clubs, where the chickenshit level is so high I've yet to be able to write about it. My radio book, Kennedy Blue, is the one I shit-canned. It's just too painful for me to touch it yet--

tW-D: Except Rex, Miller Maniacs, no one's seen this book, but you can read the few remaining pages, right here... YEAH, dig it, readers YOU alone are privileged to share the few last remaining pages of same, right here (it's at the end of the book, but DON'T PEEK), thanks to TAL Publications and The Killer Man... now, back to you, Rex--

REX: Maybe when I'm old -- you know, 120 or something -- I'll be able to take hold of that chunk of cooling magma and harden it into something readable. God, they fought me at every turn, those paper-shuffling, simpering, gutless mavens of the mike -- and I had numbers out the doors, Jack. (70% of the audience in Iowa, for example, in 1957 -- where I pounded Amos 'n' Andy into the fucking DIRT. Sorry -- by the way -- I've ingested nothing but Romilar and Contac for fifteen days. Perhaps that, and the fact I've had six hours sleep in two weeks will explain portions of this response. The conversation was not hallucinated but did take place in a recent wet dream.)

tW-D: Ah-hah! I always had Killer Miller pegged as a Cough Syrup Commando... An admitted Romilar Raider (ahhh,

hearkens back to my own ill-spent highschool daze...).... Gotta remember t' try that combo, tho', someday when I'm really desperate -- Romilar, Contac, and MAJOR sleep deprivation... could start a new fad, here, Nancy Baby, ReaganCakes, you ' all listenin' here on outlaw KILL Radio...? "JUST SAY NO" t! that evil screamin' monkey ready t' bite into y' back... "Yeah, Mom, but Uncle Rex say he does it..."

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REX: So what's your excuse, D-mented?

But let me return to the semi-serious business of censorship, as so much of this boy's life has dealt with it. When my first album came out Dan Sorkin took Lenny 's new album and mine and played them back to back for two hours. Mine, by the way, was the most unfunny, contrived piece of Ka-Ka ever pressed flat. But this was 1960, and I had the top-rated show in St. Louis -- an 11 share playing jazz, I swear to you, 30-minute Herbie Manne *** bossa nova flute solos in afternoon drive. I fuckin' OWNED radio, and you -- you were the little people--

_ Where was I? Sorry -- I had to go to the door. More medicine came.

My gig on radio was to emulate Lenny and Redd and the stand-up guys, Sahl and some of the clean people, and my radio idols of old. (My contemporaries were -- in New York, say -- Jean Shepherd and Jonathan Schwartz, whom Shepherd always called "Fred Oleanginous" on the air.) I was 400 years before that lisping faggot (NAME DELETED) and that skinny prick (NAME DELETED) -- I was #1 -- and any pencil-necked geek who wants to dispute it can meet me FRIDAY! FRIDAY AT WRESTLEMANIA! THAT'S THE BIG TENT BEHIND MOTOR SPEEDWAY WHERE I WILL PERSONALLY POUND THE CRAP OUT OF THOSE WHINING CUNTS AT WEERD TITZ SHITZINE.

Two positions, seemingly a contradiction between two equally valid principles, resolves that our slide down the sewer must be stopped at all costs. The second resolves that the ultimate corruption and penultimate vileness is that of which imposed censorship is symptomatic: Creeping Chickenshitism. These two sides of The Great Debate coexist or appear to us as a kind of ironic antimony. But both arguments hold about as much water as a 53-year-old bladder. We've been sliding down the sewer

since Adam got into fruit, and shit has been rolling downhill since God said, "No, sorry, Son -- YOU die for their sins, Okay?"

Let me give you a scenario, and if you don't dig it you can insert your own. It can be on abuse, unaffordable health care,

prisons, environmental crime, the failure of the education system, the parts of the slide down the goddamn sewer that matter -- the parts that are killing us, robbing us blind, corrupting us, lying to us, leaving us bitter and polarized and Balkanized and fragmented as broken glass -- never mind what it is on. But make it real, that's all I ask. My scenario: a kid is stolen away. Kidnapped. Held prisoner. Abused. Tortured. Mutilated. His life is ruined. His torturer is caught, acquitted on a technicality, or scams the parole board with some "born again" frammis and he's back on the street. If I want to deal with that boy, and Chester the Molester, and what they mean to us and what our unwillingness to deal with it means to them, I can promise you I'll be dealing with it using crowbars and barbed wire and sledgehammers. You can take your scalpels and elegant writing and jam them all the way up your ass because you are fucking IRRELEVANT to reality if that's what's concerning you. STOP WORRYING ABOUT THE WORDS, YOU FUCK, WORRY ABOUT THE ACTS! What the hell is going on around us, open your goddamn eyeballs and look -- who's nutzoid here? THIS IS NOT ABOUT WRITING, MOTHERFLOGGERS, IT'S ABOUT SEEING.

I'm not into writing, I'm into communicating. I'm no writer, I'm a jazz musician. You want writing...? See this writing on my fly? I gotta yo' mama's writing on my Hebrew National Salami -- all right?

tW-D: (Segue back to Slob review): Miller takes risks, plenty of them, in his machinegun imagery, in the intensity of his stream-of-consciousness internal dialogue, in his hip rush of language-flow. But, for me at least, it was a pure-platinum payoff. This book was listed as "the first in the Jack Eichord Trilogy," and I eagerly awaited (read: chewed my nails to the freakin' quick waitin' ...) the release of additional novels following the pursuits of Jack Eichord, hard-drinking, tough-guy cop, who is thrust into the role of "expert," in solving unusual major crimes of

violence.
ext

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MAJOR CRIMES of VIOLENCE is what Miller unflinchingly records and plays back in the theater of the mind:

And now he is out of the car and moving toward humans again, moving through the darkness faster than anyone alive has ever seen him move, and in his right hand he is holding a

heavy coil of taped tractor-strength safety chain. In a few seconds he will see the little people coming down the hardball there in the blackness and he feels the strong human heartbeat nearby and he churns ahead into the pitch black where the human is.

The blunt, thick fingers shaped like huge, steel cigars lash out with the coil of chain and it cracks into something solid and there is a scream and his face beams with the job of using that thick, rock-hard wrist and forearm of bulging muscle with the fluid snapping motion that he's worked on until it is a part of him all smooth and automatic as he makes the lethal chain smash out, uncoiling and striking like a big snake whipping out and splitting the human head open snakewhipping into the man killing him in that one powerful smacking wet bloodsmear.

And the hot, red, rushing thing has set his brain on fire and Death has dropped the dripping links of chain and is slashing out with that big, razor-sharp bowie all wild and insane with his surging pressure cooker exploding as he rips the human open taking the fresh heart in a tearing, gutting, rending of flesh and offal and bloody organs and bone as the profluent river of Death floods the night and nothing stops a river.

Yes. Technically, Miller's work may be challenged as "over-heated" and "overwritten," but goddamnit, he wields words

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like a bloody axe, cutting through the soft meat of existence, chopping to the bone... and, no, this is not the clumsy gushing outpour of an untalented novice, but the wild, berserker invocation of primal Chaos loosed by a skilled work-acolyte steeped in pop culture, willing the shackles of "civilization" be shattered, and who senses the way of the Lycanthrope the way of Crowley's Cult of the Beast and Michael Bertiaux's Cult of the Black Snake... or "Resurgent Atavism's" conjurings of madness/power... But THE SAVAGE/WEREWOLF totally focused, ravenous for the blood of those who feed upon the lambs... THE ABUSERS....

On the first read, the denouement seemed almost a letdown, after the sheer onwardrushingenergy of this novel that wires your brain with its amphetamine-like spill of images and dialogue, like a Benny-poppin' trucker flatout down black-iced curves of Highway 666... After a second read, I conceded that,

after the incredible intensity of buildup, nearly anything that Miller could have done would seem an anticlimax, and that it was, indeed, well-tied in its conclusion. There was just a touch of too much "softness" in its ending scenes, the slightest holding back from taking its madness alltheway (without betraying too much, I trust, to any who have not yet read it -- the lives of the animals held just a bit too precious for my sense of credibility). But the delicately interwoven textures of the book itself -- particularly in the contrasts between Eichord and Edith's lovemaking and the bestial lusts of Chaingang -- are superb studies in point and counterpoint.

For my money, Slob is an exceptional read. Miller is one Helluva storyteller and a wordsmith of visionary power! I would recommend it to anyone with the guts to stare into the skull of a tractor-chain wielding, 500-lb. monster with paranormal abilities, a genius-level IQ schizo'd with fugues of autism and tortured-childhood regression and rabid cannibalistic frenzy and kills to equal each and every pound of his gargantuan bulk (it's like envisioning the wrestler, The One

Man Gang, on a psycho rampage...).

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t{W-D: Rex, the above is an almost-verbatim review I did for Lil" Demon Review, printed way back in May of '88 (and sent you a copy of same, little realizing...) In retrospect, we find that this whole CHAINGANG MANIA has turned into a far bigger thing than the original "trilogy" we (the collective readership) anticipated. Did you have any idea at the time where all of this would lead...?

REX: I suppose the intensity of my writing style fools a lot of people into thinking I just sat down and hammered these (books) out one by one in a sudden white heat without malice aforethought, or as if my stream of consciousness, having swollen its banks, blew out all the dams and spilled onto the page like the Jonestown Flood... No. It wasn't that way at all. I did this massive outline for the entire Eichord series (Slob through Iceman), about 150 single-spaced pages, with elaborate preparatory work. I drew maps of various settings for scenes, put in a lexicon, did a four-page sketch of all my characters, plot exposition, and papered the walls of my office, all 25 feet of its length, with Eichord/Chaingang/antagonists notes and data. I wanted to do some really bizarre killers with wild psychological twists that nobody 'd done before, with MOs that really turned the tables on the "stock" serial slayers that appear over and over in popular fiction, so I used the Diagnostical Statistical Manuals, a series of psychiatric manuals as a basis for my villains. I would select a set of parameters, then interview doctors, postulating, "If this and this happened to a person with this psych profile, then... fill in the blanks,

Doc..."

tW-D: Do you have any additional comments/insights of the Chaingang character that you'd like to lay bare for us?

REX: First, let me say that I've never envisioned Chaingang as the big fat biker with the earring, or the wrestler type you mentioned. No, I wanted him to be different. He can con a girl into his car if he wants, or... whatever... In fact, the only artist who's gotten close to capturing my mental image of him is Roger Gerberding (for "Sweet Pea," in Midnight Graffiti #3) -- the hard, black marble eyes in the doughy face--

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tW-D: You picture him more as sort of a primal enfant terrible...?

REX: Yes, in the sense of a wounded child in the body of a human juggernaut, a pure sociopath, who acts solely upon the dictates of his own raging will, inflicting suffering and death as retribution for his own suffering--

tW-D: Like Nietzsche 's Ubermensch, truly beyond the bounds of Good and Evil...?

REX: Duh, duh... Nietzsche's underwear? Pass me that cough syrup, Damon. Yes, I suppose there's some element of that as there is in Fu Manchu or Dr. Shade (Sky King's nemesis from OTR) or Holmes" Moriarty. When you ' re playing around with themes "beyond good and evil" you're mucking about with personal duality, the search for moral redemption and forgiveness, a lot of -- as we say down at the steel mill -- heavy shit. You take elements of what I appear to do: as ad hominem writing, purposely -- defiantly -- anti-intellectual storytelling without a shred of nuance or aesthetic. Characters who may or may not be unrelenting misanthropes, profoundly perverted (man, could I tell you some straight skinny on psychos in this biz that'd fry your brainstem -- yesssss, The Shadow knows... -- but I'm savin' that for my true crime exposé, The Horror of Hllror.... Want to avoid seein' your name in print? Just send your dollars care of ol' tight-lipped Uncle Rex, at... No. Seriously: Surprised? This racket is crazier than radio!), massively dysfunctional -- and these are the "good guys," never mind the villains! -- transcend simplistic moral limitations. The writer who embraces such themes now becomes his subject matter or his least sympathetic voice -- dig? Now as he writes (fantasizes) from a dark back alley mindset, alienating his Readers rather than seducing them, confusing and disturbing the Squeamish, he is misogynic, homophobic, Anti-Semitic, Anti-Semantic, anti-Social, Auntie Mame -- stop me if you've heard this one--

A fan from Germany wrote me a while back to tell me

Chaingang is a mythical creature, on a par with Frankenstein,

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Dracula, or the Wolf Man. It's rewarding to get that ate of response -- it means, Damn! I've really pulled it off. In act, I receive letters all the time from people who believe Chaingang really exists, asking "does he do this or that?" That's when you realize your character has taken on a life beyond your own imagination and the written page -- then it begins to get mee than a little weird... a little scary... and you start to empathize a bit with ol' Doc Frankenstein....

-D: One notices in the physical packaging of Slob (not SE intin® that waycool cover) the telltale signs of rusiyeb production/editing on the part of Signet -- tpyos (hee-hee!) 2B the ass, including the almost-unbelievable misspelling 0 Bunkowski as "Bunkowksi" in the chapter title (Pg. 55) in what 20-point-bold typeface...?, and the bizarre slide into first person narrative (completely out of sync with the rest of the book) in chapter 3, "Jack Eichord -- Reformed drunk" -- exactly how much of a hurry were they in to market your over-the-cutting-

i ovel? .

Be vate that a rushjob? I'll show you a rushjob: This is arushjob. I forgive typos. Jake Eichord -- most of all, my fave -- because all the blurb people wrote Jake Eichord proving that I'm not the only writer who reviews hundreds of books a year without reading any of them. They bought Slob for a compe 0 bags of Chicklets, a kiss, two collect calls, and a promise not to come in my mouth.'. Wouldn't YOU be in a hurry to market it? Serially, mass murder -- er, mass market paperbackers -- I am still crazy about the gang at NUL, uh - NAL, sorry again -- the Nyquil kicked in. They gave me a career, were kind and patient, and the ones I had were better than just okay in the sack. I do have one small bone to Pick with the Penguins and the Vikings -- I'm still waiting or Silbersack to return my call from 1988 -- can he still be out 0 the country? John Silbersack and I are still good friends. He was a stand-up guy at NAL and I wish him luck in his new situation at Warner Books.

*? t. WINTER-DAMON

tW-D: Rex, one last question triggered by this first book:

Chaingang's Achilles heel turns out to be the soft spot he has for animals, to be specific, the puppies; are you an animal lover, and, if so, what kind of pets does Killer Rex Miller keep out in the outback of rural Missouri...? [! d guess (hunting?) dogs (the kid'z a real genius, yeah...), race horses...? and perhaps tropical fish...? (seems I've Spotted some reference in your work, tho! I can't remember where, that hint you may have some experiential knowledge of same...? piranhas...?)... or a few choice herps like one of those baddass monitor lizards/Komodo dragons or maybe a mated pair of black mambas or a pit of sidewinders or a cobra snake for a necktie (shades o' olt Bo Diddley!)...?

REX: You 're wise in the way of the world, Dr. Winter-Damon, I RUV animals not people. The shrinks calls it "transference," I'm told. I'm for anything that can't protect itself: animals, kids, the elderly -- we've got a lot of abusers and a ton of victims. I feel sorry for Mon, battered by Dad after a hard day at the bar, but Mom can get her wits about her, buy some Mace, run, hitchhike to Vancouver, SOMETHING. You put an animal in a roadside attraction or a donkey baseball game, you glom onto a kid while he's on his paper route or hurt a baby girl innocent in her crib, you terrorize an old lady in a tenement because you CAN -- I want you to BLEED FROM THE EYES you sorry sack of worms, and I want to dance on your grave and hear your screams through the dirt. What was the question, goddammit? Oh, yeah, we have the usual shit: three tomcats that hate us, all found abandoned - dropped by these MORONS in rural Missouri, duh, duh, the neighbor's seventeen dogs, I have a pet rabbit my mother-in-law and I call

"ours," the most exotic animal in my house is named Carol. That's another story.

Frenzy, Rex Miller, Onyx Horror, November 1988. 302 pgs., \$3.95. ISBN

0-45 1-40105-0.

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My viewpoint has mellowed considerably toward this one
i i i f it and Stone low
since I first did a two-part review 0 eh Louie bows
wdg U.K.). (That contract with Dagatin
Prd ie a out on me for slamming his book
absolutely nothing to do with it -- maprie riae - a rai
six reads, I've either grown more chari ; D
hs Sy title strengths outweigh its shortcomings, plotwise- ae
th concept -- what if you take this very contro i : ol
blooded sociopathic killer-for-hire, then totally destabt ve nim
so he's acting out of a hot rage of vengeance...? S Mentarly
basic R&R (rape and revenge) story, but with = p Seat
vicious twists and a degree of sexual oe ates) pea

t (so, what else would expect
mass-market paperback form? you are
in Frank Spain, loses
ler Miller?). Mob hitman, I
Each tier man, even loses his near-innocent saiguiers weet
couple of teenage scam artist/would-be pimps... That = see
things turn really ugly. And Rex's flair for gritty narra
ferbal pyrotechnics explodes onto the page. Witness:

"Move-star money," the John told her in the
room. But she could not foresee what was in
store. She could not read the signs that a man
of experience might have seen and so.
She was Spain's messed-up child of a four " 7
year-old daughter. Pure cherry and the

horse out of the chute is a bad one.
It is a business of numbers pure and simple.
Hooking is all math. meat : =
bers. Minutes in the saddle. Speed. ©
are and turnover, like a fast burger franchise.
All by the old numbers again. It becomes a
percentage thing. So much chance of are
ripped off. So much change of ' vice post ' °
in c
h chance of being hurt. So much
pedeat you'll be crippled or offed by a psycho.

even Johns. Whackos. Vice collars.

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Pimps. The life a street ho is obviously
marvelous. One reason why they do it. The
bucks. Numbers again. Hers could have would
have should have been number three hundred
seventeen or something. That was the John she
might have been street-wise enough to protect
herself against. But he was number three.

Miller's skillful use of syntactical parallelism is forceful,
sending the reader plunging fastforward into his Hellish vision
of despair, invoking a list the impact of whose whole vastly
transcends the sum total of its individual addends, reminding
one of the poet Walt Whitman...

Or take this thumbnail sketch of a particularly sordid mob

porn peddler and an organizational "flow chart" of the smut rackets:

He was a Packager. He had the whole Production thing, the last stop on the pain line. Rhapsody, ironically titled by the former owner, was just one of the indies feeding the Blue Kriegal operation, which was tied to the St. Louis people. He didn't know who was involved and didn't want to know. It was bad enough having to deal with a freak like Kriegal. Kriegal's thing was run by St. Louis, who was under Chicago, and them fuckers -- the less you know about them, the longer you live,

Porn was a family operation as far as he was concerned. And his level of the family the remora sucking up to the big fish that could get you through the heavy surface scum, really was a family. A small circle of people all involved in the same shit. The people he bought the girl from, the Freunds -- shit, they sold to Blue Kriegal. There were indies all over the country. The production end wasn't shit on the little

THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS

ie stuff like this. All that bogus bullshit eet the mob controlled pornography, that just newspaper jive.

Reies conirétied that shit. Kinks like Jon Belmonte, who got off on little kids, or torture, or whatever circus love you were into. What the mob controlled was the distribution end. Which was where the bucks came from, the guys who pulled the exhibitor's strings. The one way oe always know where the mob was, you follow . e money. The little stuff, the nickel-and-dime skin house, nobody cared. But set into some serious and it was the family.

Blue Kriegal was always braggin " about how well-connected he was in the St. Louis operation, but Jesus Christ, anybody with half a brain would have sense enough to know that was about 90 percent bullshit. Who in their right fucking mind would have anything to do with a stone whackadoo like Blue Kriegal if they didn 't have to? He was a fucking maniac. Little tiny kids 'n' shit. Damn. It was enough to make you sick. Belmonte had to deal with him a couple of times a year when Kriegal would come down through McAllen and want Belmonte to get eo Mexican stuff. And he'd have to take the weir some of a bitch over and get him straight with

some poor little baby. Crazy fucker. That _
the kind of maniac you had to deal wit
etimes.
Searle Belmonte got off on young oi
Even a good-looking young boy once in a while.
Take 'em down real good. He could dig that.
But not no little babies 'n' shit. He was a little
kinky sure. Plenty twisted and whatnot. But he
wasn't fucking CRAZY.

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#6 t. WINTER-DAMON

Miller's prose snarls with conviction. He's seen what lies
beneath the stone, and once his verbal hooks have you by the
shirt collar, he's out to kick that stone out of place, shove your
face right down in that nasty little hold it left exposed, and let
you see closeup what's wrigglin' around in the dirt...

Or, consider the way Rex kinda speedshifts on y', just jams
it, shift into gear, lets those wheels spin and squeal and kick up
smoke, and skids out on these bizarro tangents:

Every crime scene Eichord remembered you'd
get hit with a little shot of this sudden-death
thing. It didn't matter how many times you saw
it, even the most crusty, hardened ME feit some-
thing at the bad ones, some sense of waste, some
flicker of remorse at the loss, or perhaps it would
come on them slowly, layering its cumulative
effect in a tiredness, manifesting itself in world-
weary humor of black, low comedy. Anything to
get you through.

Eichord had seen the bad ones, The kids. The
pets. The old folks. Whole families, Mass
graves. Torture scenes that made paintings of
hell look like Wyeth landscapes. There were
some he'd never completely shake loose from.
Rolling though the night traffic they passed a
place where the highway had been blasted
through some boulders and on a rock about the
size of Providence, Rhode Island, some moron
had left a bit of late-twentieth-century shit and
wisdom. There across the huge boulder, fading in

the sunny passage of time, crudely spray-painted
in shaky letters is the legend,

DEBBIE SUX

The lost generation. The beat generation. The
me generation. The high-tech generation. And

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now, the Debbie Sux generation. Fucking words
7 Sine funn archaeologists from the planet
Garbanza X will have a time trying to decode
some of our more primitive hieroglyphics. Jac
Eichord thought to himself that he'd like to be
there when the Exalted Chief Expositor of the
Eleusian Mysteries is called in to translate the
profound meaning of "Debbie Sux."

Miller's pacing is impeccable here, a Grand - te
Verbal Retroflex, a scam artist who can canes wi ` "envi
i -jawe as
ound us, the crowd of gawking, s ack-jawed Mm
ot NEVER outguess his sleight-of-hand tricks in his literary
game of Three Card Monte...
o We the collective readership, eagerly oe the eae
` ibuti inci his evil house-of- .
ashfire of retribution to incinerate t
Be snd purify in the white heatflash of Miller's righteous
B ss cauch as the buildup in the first half of Frenzy eee
the latter half seemed a major disappointment... it read li ea
hasty plot outline devoid of any convincing sense of eon ` ea
kept thinking, he had this GREAT idea but I think the etd
effervescence of the metaphoric Per : oe men - :
i ardly
savoring suddenly tasted flat, and Rex cou
SS ai on his NEXT bottle and... like maybe Chateau ae
Shadow...?). And it was weighted by a pete aes omede
inep i ingeri i enly subter
b's ineptness in not fingering their su
Fain as is shooter in a cross-country duckshoot for family
vengeance.

tW-D: Rex, in retrospect, how do YOU feel abonds remeye: as
compared to your other books? Did you enjoy writing tones
you took the plunge or were you eager to veg a 7
project? Hell, do you think I'm being too hars ry

sessment of it...?

REX: I certainly DO thing you're too harsh in your assessment

SSE". -

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of it! Frenzy is my gonadotroph
) phic response to the book
rea telling me they'd buy two instead of one. I wrote it
in 18 minutes, which I'm told is what it took Thomas Pynchon
7 type the first word of The Crying of Lot 49. Of course he was
aE eine = pO a major, major writer just told me it is
OOK by a living writ "Ti insan
on ote ig er, and "I like that Chainsaw
mae wen A the original working title for this book (up thru
oO ?yo" 1 i i
ee) "Rampage"? and, if so, why the last-minute
REX: You can't get enough of this shit, can you, Damon? Yes
Wy was Rampage, and they changed it -- now stop giggling,
illiam Sanders -- [swear before God, because Rampage is the
a of a movie. J found the new title on the book when I saw
€ en mechanical. They had changed the name to Death
ree . I'm sorry -- Rocky? No, Frenzy. (It was their second
choice -- they originally retitled it North By Northwest.)
Sah (I told you he was the Grand Master of the
_ a. Retroflex, eh what?) Well, I guess we can assume the
lange of titles wasn't exactly your idea of unerring logic (a
itch... in there, somewhere)... Hell, Rex, you're just lucky
they didn 't decide to call it "Marnie...". Woulda kinda lost that
ee vicious, edgy feel, wouldn't it...?
ex, have most of your books pone th ug! i
a ere 2 rough a change of title
Boe The early books did. Slob was the one exception
ropane Men was originally K-I-L-L, Frenzy was Rampage and
Stone Shadow was Viper, a.k.a. The Way of the Viper.
tW-D: And, speaking of The Way of the Viper, it's time for --

Stone Shadow, Rex Miller Onyx, No
ISBN 0-452-40164-6. LX, vember 1989. 282 pp., \$3.95.

Stone Shadow reprises "unrecoverin ic seri
£" alcoholic serial killi
vabert/non-expert, Jack Eichord. And the big man eon
ike gangbusters. A flawed and very human protagonist with

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the capacity for heroism, clawing his way up from the Helipit of

his own personal demons to tackle a case seemingly already solved.

The only sour note, here, is the production chumps at NAL outdid even their Slob blunders by completely blowing away the text of what should have been page 172, leaving the reader only with the vast and vacuous chapter heading, DALLAS. We'd hoped to be able to present this missing text here, but despite Rex's time and efforts spent trying to locate his file copy (if one still exists), and his phone call to NAL attempting to secure the original manuscript copy from them, all failed to pan out. Apparently, prior to or during a move into new headquarters some while back, the NAL folks'd "cleaned house," no doubt disposing of many such potentially HOT HOT HOT collectibles... DAMN, SAM! Well, maybe someday a copy' ll surface and Tal and I will be able to con the Killer Man into an exclusive, at last presenting it for your reading pleasure in some other TAL Publications' project...

True to form, Rex pushes his narrative flow past the red line with his wired designer-blend of sex, slaughter and insanity. The book leads off with a kinky scene of sexual exploitation that smokes and sizzles -- just a @&*! hair short of hardcore...

This time, Eichord's called in to consult with local law enforcement down in the Big D, Dallas, re. a case of brutal kidnapping and sexual enslavement that blows wide open as the perp cops to a career as a recreational slayer (yeah, slightly skewed deja vu -- shades of Henry Lee, right...?).

Handsome ne'er-do-well Ukie Hackabee is a far different beast than behemothic Chaingang, but his inside-the-psyche-of-the-psycho logic is the same mental tapdance-on-razors that took us down down into the skull of Daniel Edward Flowers

Bunkowski:

"So now that I'm on that kind of footing with you and you find out for yourself that Ukie is the king of killers of ALL TIME, just like the

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Champ," he said in a Muhammad Ali voice that made Eichord smile unexpectedly, "well, then

please keep an open mind and let me try and explain it all to you."

"Fair enough," Jack said, shaking his head a little.

"But you GOTTA know the territory, like the song says. Don't rule anything out just 'cause it sounds weird, folks. Okay. This is so... Oh, jeez I just can't get into it all it's so spooky and vast and wonderful and awesome. Like where to start. Okay. Okay. I know if I start taking you back through all this you're going to tune out on me again but you have to understand the background or everything is meaningless. It is power, Jack. Such as you can't and never will be able

to fathom and it doesn't just spring from nowhere."

"Power."

"The power of... Before I tell you. I know you said you believe in God. No doubt you also believe in the devil. But for just a second put the thoughts of good and evil out of your head and look at this objectively. Forget the fallacies of Pythagorean and Plutarchean quasi-moralities the metaphysics of the Orphic and anthropomorphic deities, the dubious disciplines of the gnostic and Nichomachean, the orgiastic and cathartic, the Shinto and Shugendo, the Taoistic Maoistic, Confusian, and confusing dialects and analects and sects and sex of the spastics and the flagellants and the secular and the ecclesiastical and the Mikkyo and the Ogolala shaman and the Hellenistic beliefs and spiritual suckering that forms the thick crust of so-called religious thought from asceticism to Zoroaster."

"You're losing me."

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"Yeah, Okay. Start over. How do you know you believe in God? HE didn't just part the clouds one day and in a booming, thunderous voice proclaim to Moses Eichord the way it was gonna be. You learned from Mom and Pop. The Church. Sunday school. Relatives. Friends. Friends and relations on weekend vacations. Half-remembered tribal prayers, incantations

passed from generation to generation, inscriptions in the stone memories of proud and noble ruins, monoliths carved by illiterates yet meant to be seen from the sky, dusty dogma and rotting ritual, surviving mysteries on crumbling papyrus, fragments of ancient urns from long-disintegrated cities, holy places gone to dust, stagnant sacraments and vestigial words of worship found in sunken cities of the dead, and it was ever thus from the blue waters of the Aegean Sea to the muddy Miss, we learned from the Word. God does not assert himself/herself, nor does Satan. Sitting at the knee of Isis, Serapis, Attis, Sabasios, Hecate, Medea, Persephone, Earth Mother Mary, basking in the katachthonian subworld 's revenge and the cultist muck of Steve Holland deification, some cunt -- excuse my French -- passed along the marvelous, mystical, magical, mixed-up mystery of good and evil. But what if indeed there is no moral wrong or right but only superimposed force that we will refer to as phantasmagoria. It, asexual and omnisexual, neither he nor she, It upper-case, is to the existence of thought what a constantly shifting, complex succession of optical effects and fluctuating scenes, seen or imagined, is to vision? Eh? Then by the yellowed yarmulke of Yahweh, by the turquoise turnips of the Tetragrammaton, by the crimson chronology of the Anti-Christ, by

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the dirty dipstick of the Dionysiacs, then we must reexamine and reevaluate our sources of power.

"Now you must deal with a source of force. A wellspring. A centering so deep within the core that it cannot be reached by ordinary means. It is to concentration what brain surgery is to a headache. It is to focus what a shish-kebab skewer in the cortex is to a toothpick in the canapes. It would be to t'ai chi ch'uan, moo duk kwan tang soo do, hapkido, tae kwon do, wushu, and Shaolin kung fu, and any other chop-suey bullshit like hwa rang do, dim mak, and dim ching, what nuclear devastation is to a firecracker.

"I call it the Way of the Viper and I would explain it to you as a nonmystical martial philosophy that impinges upon what you would wrongly label the Satanic. It draws on the rarest of all the secret combat ryus...."

You've just been MINDFUCKED AND BRAINDRILLED by the KILLER MILLER... Ha! And you think I'm gonna GIVE AWAY the secret left-hand path of the Way of the Viper in a freakin' review? -- no way Pill-Grim, no way... save your Sheckels, then buy the book... see the movie (maybe one of these days...).

tW-D: Will we see more elucidation on this concept of The Way of the Viper in any future Miller projects?

REX: A short story called "5" has some of that feel to it, that will be in Behind the Mask, the Tor superhero anthology that Kurt Busiek and Lawrence Watt-Evans have co-edited. I've just finished a short piece called Prayers of the Predator -- a Chaingang short -- that sold to John Macclay's Voices in the Night. There's a taste of that also in isolated set pieces in some of my forthcoming books.

tW-D: GOT THAT, MILLERMANIACS? THE MAN! SGOT

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SOME REAL WET STUFF JUST WAITIN! IN THE WINGS... Remember, YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST! Okay. Okay. I promise to calm down... Get a grip. Chill out and get back to our discussion... In Stone Shadow, Rex also returns to his leit motif: child abuse breeds monsters. Witness:

The tar-paper shanty stands on an unfarmable piece of ground called Deadman's Cut. Inside, two little boys, eyes tearing, noses running, filthy, hear Mah-maw scream again and one reaches out to take the other's hand and they wait behind the feed sacks. They know he will come soon. It is only a matter of time.

The woman, their biological mother, is at the end of her third trimester. It is bad this time.

"CLETUS," she shrieks again.

The two children shudder and wait. They are just little boys. Extraordinary, to be sure. But

nevertheless little boys like any other. Yet in this brutal and depraved environment, in this primitive and evil world of horror, they are treated as freaks.

Because they are identical. Eyes, nose, mouth, even ears. Perfectly formed from the convexities to the concavities, twins so startingly, shockingly alike their appearance staggers the viewer. But they are just little children. Molested. Tortured. Abused. Their twin lives an unending nightmare of depravity. They wait silently, waiting for the

next pain or degradation or moment of terror.

No. If you missed it, I'm NOT about to betray the hairpin switchbacks of plot that Miller's narrative navigates like an 18-wheeler cowboy pacin' himself with hits of PCP and ICE while dealin' with blown brakelines. I bought this at 8:00 p.m. and finished it in the redeyed predawn morning hours. Like Slob,

| a t WINTER-DAMON THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS 45

this one gets inside the psycho's skull and STAYS there. "VIETNAM. THE JUNGLE-GREEN

HARDBOILED. Yeah. It takes one t' know one, eh, WORLD DE BLOODED, Jackie Boy...? It ain't perfect and I WOULD have liked more SOUL SHATTERING

| on The Way of the Viper, but Rex promises we'll be seeing INSANITY. more, in forthcoming stories, and ol' Stone Shadow it'll Woe fis berths unwary, viaielelaced Biwas novell! bul eho

| a . ; a

surerai" Hell blow the cobwebs outta all 8 eylindersin: picks up this Bouncing Betty of a book that'll totally blow the tW-D: Rex, how, if at all, did your previous career as a DJ help minds of the unhip. A first-person narrative that suddenly

| prepare you for this gonzo style of writing you 've developed...?

segues, chainwhips into third-person-omniscient P.O.V., then

| REX: It didn't prepare me for anything except perhaps the returns to first-person with the bite of a diamondback rattler...

| ability to spot a flaming asshole at 350 yards. a bit like watching old Mission Impossible reruns spliced with

Steel Metal Jacket on fastforward then letting a trained ape

| Profane Men, Rex Miller, Onyx Novel, August 1989. 235 pp. punch down to freeze-frame, letting it roll on SlowMo, jabbing

| \$4.50 (pb). ISBN 0-451-40169-7. at the buttons randomly, into playback, fastforwarding again,

i ey you ' eae an guezlis leftover: '60s' acid Koolaid

Finally, after waiting while three books in the Jack Eichord BOG EROREE"

SES:OF BASLE PPE men Laan =. .

series saw print, here is the proto-Miller novel that started it all.

Sie. plot (such as it Ss but who the fuck cares...? Killer

+R THIS ONE first, blitzed a 17- iller is the post-post-Bill Burroughs of
3-M -- MURDER,
| AS legend now. basal, Rex wrpte MAYHEM & MINDFUCK, Inc.-) deals with a
spike team,
page excerpt to his Rex Miller's mega-name customer, Harlan TOLEDO BLADE
led. in Dj D. 1 P f ih ,
| Ellison (I wouldn't get the bright idea, kids, to try this at home bara
f | : 'An . yee Sune MOM, Ue
| yerself: Mr. Ellison gets MAJORLY PISSED by intrusions on aCKate ys GF
208er erikana, and sent out to terminate a
| his privacy by the limitless starving hordes of the unwashed pirate
radio station broadcasting a high-tech, high-wired fusion
masses, greedily seeking the blessings of the POPE of of tabloid-like
kinkoid personal ads and Soldier of Fortune
DANGEROUS VISIONS -- NOT! And HAVE YOU EVER career ops with Tokyo Rose-
type propaganda and sublms.
| SEEN HARLAN ELLISON MAJORLY PISSED...2 YOU Witness this quote from pg.
89:

THINK WHAT CHAINGANG DOES AIN'T PURDY...?),

\ and the rest is history.... Profane Men being just a few years

i ahead of its time at that moment, Rex lifted a character named
t "Chaingang," and wrote another six books to satisfy his agent's |

canny suggestions and a multibook deal with NAL/Onyx... with

one already out and two more upcoming from Pocket Books...

Not since the acid-edge visionary images of Apocalypse Now,

l| have such surreal, "paranoiac critical" (to borrow from

Daliesque jargonese) scenes of 'Nam erupted forth to assault

: : bodied and dehumanized, unrecognizable and
the sensory perceptions of aa / eames, The cover blurb does
inepectromrauliie, neliher woman nor macline:
a neat wrap-up summary (for once...): she vanishes in the air, the cold
neoglot filtering

"Whiskey, Zulu, Lima....°. The woman's voice
reverberates through a chamber of space expands,
layered onto stacked tracks so sophisticated not
even the music industry has heard of them. The
voice comes out of KILL Outlaw Radio camou-
flaged by a zillion iron filings spread like so much
electro-peanut butter across Ampex heads: re-
corded, rewound, remixed, reunited. Disem-

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out of Dusty's radio in an icy, hypnotic gloss:

"Borneo, Foxfire, Caveat, Icarus..."

"P-U! Who shit?"

"Yore mammy," I hear Shooter Price say as we clear the hootches. I hate this part of my movie. A hard-core Viet Cong rooster crows again, scaring the living shit out of me. I am operating at maximum paranoia. Not your plain, ordinary lock the door for chrissakes and if it's for me I'm not here paranoia. I'm talking speed freak, dope dealer, get out of town and no, I'm sorry we didn't bring any luggage paranoia. I want out.

By turns unreal and hyperreal, Miller's mindfucking narrative is a risky, topsyturvy rollercoasterride into Green Hell...

Slice, Rex Miller. Onyx Thriller, May 1990. 317 pp., \$4.50 (pb). ISBN 0-451-40194-8.

This, the fourth book in the Jack Eichord series, should keep Killer Miller fans riffing pages at breakneck speed for another allnite read through its whambam slam of a climax and into the aftertremors....

Wired. Like plastique.

This IS the ass-kickin' return of Chaingang, the man-mountain slayer, Daniel Edward Flowers Bunkowski, the "Chicago Lonely Hearts Killer." Thought he was dead meat? Guess again....

You know you're takin the redeye Rex Special into Hell when you flip to the opening three paragraphs:

"Morgan the dragon in flames made of aspic," the junkie said poetically, bumbling around inside the packing crate. At least it sounded like that. It could have been.

"Margo, you're a drag and I'll find me an ice

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pick..." Or any number of other junk-fuzzied weirdnesses, but to the junkie doing the mumbling only one thing counted, and that was coping. With dope there was hope.

His years of scholarly pursuits into the nature, soul, limitations, and validity of human knowledge had been cooked down to a bubbly blood-thick essence. The epistemology of "dopology." Get it and do it. Do it to it. Do it to me till I scream. Do it to me till cream. Do it to it till I dream.

O.K., so you KNOW Chaingang bought it in book I, right...? Blown to shit'n'back by Eichord down in the Chi-Town sewers. So, yeah, y'gotta ssstttrrrretttccchhh yer credibility factor justa little bit t' buy Rex's pitch here on how the 500-plus-lb. psycho makes his rumblin' return on the second page of the novel's text. But, don't let THAT distract y'. Miller takes a neat jab at blind bleedin' -heart sympathy and meddling do-gooders as the plot unrolls like a long red carpet. Blood red.

As rumored for some time (thanks to a loose-lipped slip of a wordspill on Miller's part in an interview waybackwhen....), THIS is the book where Chaingang serves as madman's midwife in the birthing of his offspring -- Son of Slob.

The subplot features Eichord in Love, Rex's tip o' the hat to the hearts'n'flowers (ohhhhhb... bad baddd pun...) cadre among his readership.

A coupla tearjerker scenes that zero in real nice... a dash of deus ex machina... (there is, believe it or not, a touch of relevance in that front cover carefully orchestrated to drag unwary followers of hardboiled fiction into a land o' weirdness beyond their wildest Elmore/Ellroy/Chandleresque delusions of street-savvy Detective lit....).

The excellent production values and line-editing, here, do penance for the slipshod rushjob seen in Slob 's debut.... By far the most polished effort to-date (of his first five books...) in

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Miller's gonzo career. Buy an extra copy: Turn a friend on,

share the rush and get 'em hooked....

tW-D: A number of friends have mentioned they were a bit confused about what happened to Chaingang between the finale of Slice and the events that take place in your latest novel, Chaingang. Can you give us any clues?

REX: I really can't because it would give away the plot to an upcoming story. "Kowloon" is one of my personal favorites among the Chaingang stories. I wrote it long ago, and at one time considered doing it as a stand-alone chapbook, but due to the hiatus of my publishing schedule when I moved from NAL to Pocket, the story will be out of sequence when it comes out. It's the 20,000-word novella that explains the missing components of the Eichord-Chaingang connection. "Kowloon" links the end of the novel Slice with Chaingang's reemergence, and reveals the secret bond between Eichord and Bunkowski. It's the lead novella in Rich Chizmar 's first Thrillers anthology, which features four 20,000-word pieces, published by CD Books. Joe Lansdale does the forward, with other novellas by Chet Williamson, Nancy Collins and Ardath Mayhar.

Iceman, Rex Miller. Onyx Novel. November 1990. 283 pp., \$4.50 (pb.) ISBN 0-451-40223-5.

Better take a long, deep breath. Do a quick reality check. Center firmly on your sense of SELF. Scan all the internal gauges. Drain the oil'n'water. Replace with 10W50 and blizzard-rated antifreeze. Clear the room of firearms, flatware, and hammers. Unplug all those power tools (PREFERABLY, DISASSEMBLE...) Leave nothing loose with cutting edge or point. Slip off that leather belt and drawer it... It's a total lockdown in Ward 39.6 (Law of Averages makes this one as callforwarding for The Number of The Beast...). Put the thought police on full alert. 'Cause Uncle Rex is about ready t' tuck y' in and turn y' out, TAKE Y' ALL THE WAY OVER THE EDGE THIS TIME, ALLTHEWAY DOWN

THE COMPLETE REVELATIONS

INTO PSYCHO CITY... Yeah. 'Cause Jack IS back.
And The ICEMAN cummeth:

There is a single eye. An eye alone. This eye watches from the darkness, seeing nothing yet seeing much. If, indeed, it IS an eye, what does it see? From its vantage point it sees shapes, strange outlines, large, shadowy forms, the familiar look of a room. An eye. One eye by itself. Cyclops.

Darkness in the room. The eye has no ears, so it cannot hear the detective on the wooden stairs, wirecutting tools snapping the wire, breaking the

police seal of a crime scene, fumbling for a set of keys. Inserting one. Clicks. Pause. Inserting another. Metal pressure. Movement.

Cyclops sees a frightening sight. A blinding rectangle of the brightest light smashes into view. A bright, dazzling opening of light in the dark outlines of what the eye sees.

A man's fearsome silhouette is framed in the brightness. He is only a large, looming black form in the center of the light. He enters, stumbling. Hand slapping the wall. Fumbling for something. Pause. Another stab into Cyclop's field of vision.

The unseeing eye, if indeed it IS an eye, might see the stabbing brightness of a flashlight beam shooting into the black, sweeping a spot on the wall as the detective finds the light switch.

The flashlight blinks off and the room is bathed in electric light. The interior of a mobile home. Yet not ordinary at first glance. The initial impression of something extraordinary is enhanced by the smell. The stench of the abattoir. The hideous, nauseating stink of the killing fields. The foul and lingering odor of the

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hasty burial ground. It attacks the nostrils in a merciless wave of stinking horror that hammers the olfactory sense.

Cyclops watches over this hellish place: 1458 1/2 (Space G) South Utica.

The first thing Jack Eichord sees...

(Drop that \$4.50 down on the counter and find out for y'rself, Pill-Grim....)

..And then he sees the rest of it and his heart cries.

Miller's finest (book) yet. Lean. Mean. And obscene.
Narrated in his trademark hip/flip dialectic of induced
psychosis. Fastforward structuring of eyeblink, info-byte,
jumpcutting chapters that pass by like the throb of whiteline
fever. His sense of presence is awesome, hallucinatory-vivid.
Zen brushstrokes on a perverse canvas of tanned human skin
in the pigments of inhuman pain and mortal suffering...
Boschian Hellscapes of transcendent terror and despair
intruding into the space/time continuum of Middle Amerikan
mundanity: Buckhead and Moss Grove and Mt. Olive (GA? --
hhhhmm, since when is GA "midwestern": see page 28 of
Slob, where "Buckhead" is referred to as "his midwestern
city?"); Blytheville, AK; the mountains of NM; Las Vegas, NV;
Amarillo and Vega, TX:

It reminded him of the deep South, where you
can drive through residential neighborhoods and
tall, centuries-old magnolias spread out over the
traffic like the elm-shaded side streets of the 40s,
before the national Dutch elm blight hit southern
and Mid-America. It was like that here. Big,
unkempt trees drooping out over the highway.

A sign assured motorists JESUS LOVES YOU
and then another that JESUS DIED FOR YOUR

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SINS. Somebody had painted on the side of an
underpass: TRUST JESUS. Eichord passed an
elderly gentleman in a slow-moving station wagon
sporting a bumper sticker telling you to HONK
IF YOU LOVE JESUS. The phrase "Bible Belt"
came to mind.

But this wasn't the Bible Belt. Perhaps it was
below the belt, he thought as he drove by large
stone abutments that looked like a mini-acropolis,
once the supports for a massive loading dock.
The compress for the cotton bales was long gone,
and so in fact was the railroad that once hauled
the cotton away. The gin was vanished. He

passed shacks for migrant workers and signs advertising Rummy Cola, Brad's Truck Brokerage, and Velma's Salon. All rust-covered. Green frog-colored lily pads floated in stagnant roadside water. Joe's garage and muffler shop. Closed. Ivy's Café. Empty. NO TRESPASSING.

A creek runs along besides a wooded area. The creek is banked by low-hanging willows, water lilies, thousands of cattails, goldenrod, water weeds of every description. An underground cable sign has all but rusted away, so that the only thing you see is the bold word WARNING.

The vestiges of a ghost town without optimism or hope. A forgotten chunk of America not even the most hypo realtor could get excited about. A storm had flung mighty oak limbs into the two lane and nobody cared. He could tell they'd been in the way of traffic for a while as he slowed and navigated his way around the partial roadblock.

Prosperity had fled. Storefronts were clogged with broken roll-top desks, legless or seatless

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chairs, boarded-up buildings like Lou's Tack and Saddle Repair, Bud's, Vega Boot & Shoe Shop. On the side of what had been a diner somebody had painted BYPASS CITY. Buy Bond's Bread for extra nutrition. Memories of the 7th War Loan. The city Meat Market was empty. Keeriist, what a ghost town.

I once faulted Rex's "sense of presence" in critiquing part II of Book II of the Eichord Saga, Frenzy. As that proverbial Poe-ian raven quoth: "NEVERMORE." The imagery here is pure tight-beamed laser holo...

Time-trippin' and consciousness-slippin', beboppin' and crime-stoppin' through a portrait of perversities so bizarre it scans like some nightmarish wetdream brainpicked from the ghost of Gilles de Rais or the lost volumes enfers of the Marquis de Sade: mindwrenching physical child abuse and Tape and

butchery; sibling incest (as per the parameters of the penal code); icepick slayings; stranglings; bludgeonings; beheadings; an Amazing Shemale love-slave; a pervert preacher; oral sex'n'sodomy; vigilante justice (like unto the Lat-Am Death Squads); ritual mutilation and cannibalism; fetishism and magickal thinking; musings on infanticide... Mondo Psychopathia Sexualis....

There 's new shit hittin' the fan in Eichord Land: Watch out, Danny Flowers and Frank Spain and Ukie and Joseph, the Brothers Hackabee, 'cause here comes Arthur Spoda, Boy Psycho, and Nicki Dodd... and... Owen Hillfloen (ever see John Waters' flick, Multiple Maniacs...?).

Killer Miller's last book, Slice, witnessed the death of MCTF team member Jimmie Lee (the "Chink" 1/2 of the "Chink & Chunk" bickering investigation team). Never fear, Eichord pard Fat Dana "Chunk" Tuny's back, along with newcomer, "tough, ace-black Monroe Tucker," as Fat Dana puts it: complete with "those little patches of baaaaad, black

Rastafarian hair clumps stickin' outta Mon-roe 's cheeks. Very scary to your basic white person."

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All this with the subtext of adoptive dad and mommie, Inck'n'Donna, raisin' Little Jonathan, The Son of Slob, this enfant terrible, through his truly terrible "Terrible Twos"...

Ol' Rex he just keep on gettin' better'n'better. This IS Miller's Finest. This IS the nexus where T-Rex Country (yeah, that Olt Tyrant Lizard-King o' Hardboiled Lit) meets razor-keen Thomas Harris-burg narrative structure and Forensics-credibility and the psychostrewn Speedmetal deathscape of a Michael Slade Grand Guignol cum-The 120 Days of Sodom i.k.a. Salo.

You KNOW y're in Miller Country (read: SOME DEEP PSYCHIC SHIT. read: SERIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS SLIPPAGE. read: MAJOR FREE-ASSOCIATION-CITY...) when y' flip open to intro-prose like this:

He suffers from disjunction of the function. A monstrous thing from his past nightmares materializes and smiles hello.

"I've got a secret," the thing oozes teasingly. Teases oozingly.

"What?" he tries to say, but only dead grotto air exhales and there is no discernible sound. The monster's face is barklike the tree-trunk neck sprouting from a foliose torso that parts and

a second head pops out of the leaves saying,
"Hello, bitch."

It is the face of a woman he has known. The turmoil and dust of an ancient investigation paralyzes his heart momentarily. Supine, in more ways than one, he spasms erect, his body caught in a paroxysm like a sneeze. But instead of achoo, Jack Eichord goes, "Say what?"

"You fucking bitch," she says, and he recognizes the puffy bloat that is the monster's lower head.

"Huh," he says in a weak stall for time. She was named Myrtle or Mildred or Minnie, one of

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the old-time names, and her last name was a state. Myrtle California. Myrtle Iowa. Minnie Minnesota. Myrtle Beach Florida. Mildred, that was it -- her name was Mildred Florida, pronounced Mildred Flo-REE-duh...

In Iceman, Rex Miller returns to the exploration of the leit motifs that thus far connect the body of his work. For all their blood'n'guts-touted Splatter-ethic, at the core, these are psycho-logic-al novels. Yet they are poles apart from, say, the more traditional forms of "consciousness slippage": as exemplified by Ramsey Campbell, Dennis Etchison or Karl Wagner. Miller studies the total schizz-out -- territory that lies just beside that Strange Land staked out and held by Thomas Harris and Bob Bloch and Philip K. Dick and Davids Lynch and Cronenberg. The duality of the human psyche. The fragging of the ego. Multiple personalities like the layers of an onion's skin or like the continually dis-integrating and reshaping forms trapped within a kaleidoscope...

At the core, we find Rex's concern for abused children. When we, society, turn our back, pretend it isn't happening, and allow monsters to abuse and prey upon children, when we don't fight the bullshit, status quo system that protects the abusers and institutionalizes them as rubber-stamped "child care" agencies and demonic daycare centers and sadistic, exploitive orphanages, a system that punishes those who seek to escape by imprisonment in Hellhole juvie concentration camps and mental hospitals, a system that turns kids loose to be abused yet again, the result is escalation -- breeding ever-more-terrifying monsters:

Daddy hated the sound of baby crying, so he began punishing baby in unusual ways. He liked using the youngster's bottom as an ashtray, for

example.

The sadism would have accelerated and the boy would have been a poor candidate for

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survival, but fate intervened. A kindly neighbor called the police one time too often and investigating officers found the little boy alone, in a shit-filled cage, and he was rescued from Dad's loving care in time.

His foster mommy, on the other hand, adored her new baby boy. It was her habit to cover the child's rear, a scarred lunar landscape of cicatrices from cigarette burns, with loving kisses.

Soon the kisses took another turn...

I read Iceman back-to-back with The Killing Man, the newest Mike Hammer epic. Trust me, if Mickey Spillane is hardboiled, then what Killer Miller's conjuring up from the Backbrain BlackHole Pit of the Human Heart are Stone T-Rex Eggs, aged for 100-mil+ years in the Subterranean Darkness of Despair...

tW-D: O.K., Rex, so I'ma niggling nitpicker on details, already, but WHAT IS THE DEAL ON BUCKHEAD...? Is Buckhead a Port-a-City? Or is it a suburb of Atlanta, GA, or a mythical "midwestern" city? Seems like I smell a story here...

REX: When I was a child I was Program Director for Esquire Magazine. They bought WXXI "Kwisi-in-Dixie" and I was the afternoon jock and PD. Atlanta, GA. 1960 or '61. The station was located in Buckhead. In the books I use it as a fictitious community name, and Eichord works out of Buckhead Station. Now let me ask you one, if I am T-Rex, does this mean I have YOUR capital letter? And are you aware Stan Tal has never printed work by a person whose first name is in lower case? Will you consider changing it to sell this? Will you sleep with the editors if they want you to? Just what exactly WON'T you do to break into print, t.?

tW-D: Rex, nobody can accuse you of not being INVENTIVE -- where in the Hell did you come up with a wildass concept (and it WORKS, too!) of a chairbound serial killer? With a transvestite /shemale sidekick...?

REX: You 're getting into my keep-personal fantasies, here, and

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I find it pleasant in the extreme. However--

tW-D: By the way, the "shemale" angle is one of my two pel "takes" on the Green River Killer -- this classy-looking broad in maybe a Caddie or a Continental or Mercedes, who NOBODY suspects is a stone slayer, and NOBODY stops to question...? NOT a sex-change. But the 1/2'n'1/2 hybrid ol porno infamy -- soft-featured, very feminine, amply-endowed with hormone-plus silicon breasts, but still packing a functional sex pistol, and, no doubt, seething internally in a maelstrom ol identity crisis/fragmentation...? Extend the concept a bit, over into the occult, and she/he may be "stealing" female souls to "feed" her/his desire to achieve the "essence female," or sacrificing to one or another of the hermaphroditic (Hermes himself acted as psychopompos, escorting the dead to Hades) godheads or gender-mutable deities, such as the male/female aspects prominent in Santerian orishas... You've apparently done a major input of SK profile data into your own head, paralleling my personal studies into the phenomenon -- any comments or insights on my GRK hypothesis?

REX: I've also written a story with this same exact plot, but I stole my idea from another writer so it was okay. Neither of us know Hermes from Herpes, by the way, but we know a good swipe when we fondle one.

Chaingang, Rex Miller. Pocket Star Books. November 1992. 310 pgs. Price: \$4.95 ISBN 0-671-31364-9.

Thanks to a word from Rex and the kind help of Editor Doug Grad at Pocket, I was lucky enough to have an Advance Reading Copy of this blockbuster in my hot, sweaty hands a good six months ahead of the inevitable stampede of Millermaniacs heading for the nearest newsrack or bookstore come Nov. I'd been eagerly awaiting its release (read: CHOMPING AT THE BIT) since I first learned those perceptive Pocket people had snatched up THE HOTTEST NAME IN HARDBOILED -- KILLER REX MILLER!

Now for Doe Winter-Damon's Anti-Quiz in LITERARY

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PSYCHOS 101:

Here's a coupula toughies, first--

Forget Norman (Psycho) Bates...

Forget Hannibal Lector. Forget Jame "Buffalo Bill" Gumb (VSOTL) and that nasty ol' Tooth Fairy, Francis Dolarhyde... (Red Dragon)...

Forget James Tyrone "Dandy" Simmons (Flood) and George Hrowne (Strega). Forget Mortay, the "Ghost Van" man (Blue Helle) and Luther "Shooter" Swain (Blossom)...

Okay, from here on out, just gets easier'n' easier--

Forget the "Sexecutioner," Martin Michael Plunkett (Silent Terror a.k.a Killer on the Road)...

Forget Katherine (Headhunter) Spann. Forget the Sewer Killer, the Vampire Killer, Jack the Bomber, and Saxon Hyde /The Ghoul /Jack Ohm/Sid Jinks/Elaine Teeze (Ghoul)....

Forget M.O. (KOKO) Dengler....

Forget Philip "The Houston Hacker" Barlowe (Act of Love)...

Now, I'll make it really easy (all the ones the covers hyped were "unforgettable," right?)--

Forget Thomas "Vincent Mungo" Bishop (By Reason of Insanity).

Forget the Maddog (Rules of the Boneyard) Motely....

Forget the folie a deux of Mary Lowe and Dr. Dominick Broussard (Mercy)...

Folie a deux II to forget: Borden (snuff film) Wilson and Richmond (snuff film) Bell (Quarry)...

Forget Stanislaus "the scholar of murder" Rolk (Ritual)...

Forget Jack Hozer and Fat Eddie (Carnivores)....

Yeah.

FORGET 'EM ALL--

Easy as pie. Kidney pie...

'CAUSE HERE'S THE BADDEST BADDASS THAT
EVER DRENCHED YOUR NIGHTMARES IN BLOOD
RED--

It's a total DEFB red alert, Mama.

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(Hint: just think 1SEEEEE.)

FICTION MORE DANGEROUS THAN
ROLLERSKATIN' THRU AN OIL-SLICK IRONWORKS
HOLDIN' A SIXPACK OF LIVE CLAYMORES....

'Cause THE BIG MAN'S BACK... AND HE'S KILLIN'
MAD...

500+ LBS of UNCAGED FURY: Yeah! Danny Boy's just
lookin' for a few GOODhearted folks...

Daniel. Edward. Flowers. Bunkowski.

Well, forget HOW they managed to chain-up Chaingang in
Cell 10 MAX D SEG VIOLENT. The only psycho in the world
rated LEVEL 7 VIOLENT.

Yeah. And Dr. Norman's got one BRILLIANT idea.

Do an implant. Rev up his rage just a bit. Put all your high
tech safeguards in place. Add maybe 200 shooters. Yeah.
Then set ol' Danny loose, take him out for a test drive, let him
cruise around the block a coupla times in some sleepy lil'
podunk town in mid-America, then FIELD TEST HIM. All
with the sanction of the ultra-sec USMACVSAUCOG spooks...

Like Slob meets Profane Men down in the Heartland (yet
another baddd pun)..... but with a NEW Killer-Miller voice,
more controlled, holdin' back just a bit, lettin' the lingo roll
along safely just under that ol' double-nickels SPEED LIMIT
for most of the trip, and kinda takin' y" by surprise when he
SLAMS THE PEDAL TO THE METAL & LETS THE TIRES
SPIN & SETS THE DUST 'N' GRAVEL KICKIN ', BURNS
RUBBER BIGTIME, LETS THE PISTONS THROB &
POUND, MAKIN' THAT STRAIGHT EIGHT SCREAM
LIKE A BAT OUTTA HELL, & PUSHESITWAYPAST THE
RED LINE....

And you've got one MAJOR UNFORGETTABLE READ:

Chaingang.

Buy yourself a copy, Pill-Grim. I ain't ABOUT t' give y'
no damn book report and spoil yer fun, Son...

But try THIS excerpt on for size:

Tho | a. 3% 1 ' a: ge denera heen 'cic

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cessful, but Dr. Norman wonders how things will go with Daniel. His affection for the beast is deep. He wonders if Daniel has bonded to him as well. Yes. Surely he has.

The dossier has been prepared by him. When Daniel awakens he will be shown the electronic display. General content, purview, presentation, and tone have all been carefully shaped. He knows precisely what it will take to engage that mind, pull him out of repose, enrage and motivate him into the cold kill fury that will allow him to function.

He has studied it himself innumerable times, and can quote content verbatim: "Police removed nine pit bulls from an establishment on Willow River Road, following a series of complaints regarding organized pit bull dogfights. Authorities said animals had been abused... were being kept for so-called death matches... Humane/society... put the dogs to sleep... Allegations of other animal cruelties... Sutter family."

Norman could see the photos of the dogs. Then the ads of animal auctions and the pictures they had to go with it. "The Genneret Gun Show and Exotic Animal Auction... dog 'butchers'... Virgil Watlow... left strays that the lab wouldn't take... Seventeen were found tied to a tree, starved to death."

It built like a hot romance novel heading for a breathless climax, or a symphony building to a timpani-filled crescendo. There was a certain undeniable aesthetic to it. He could imagine the rage that would flood Daniel's mind when it reached the report about "The Mutilator... John Wayne Vodrey... private collection of cat tails,

paws, and other anatomical mementos." Dr. Norman shuddered as he imagined the retri-

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bution in store for the targets of the dossier.

Well, gotta admit it. As a "big man" myself (as in "Big and Tall Men"), though Chaingang 'd make two of me, I've always secretly pulled for that Raging Rhino of Righteous Retribution... Danny Flowers is payback for every SOB that ever beat me up or snickered and jeered at me as a fat kid (evidently a subhuman species ever "fair game" for "showing the pencil-necked path o' the straight 'n' narrow"...), yeah, and for every asshole that ever dropped an "accidentally overheard" fat-joke or comment about diets and takin' up jogging and how SUPER it feels to be so healthclubfriggin' thin... YEAH. DANNY BOY. And every sniveling bully that ever kicked a stray dog or drowned a bag of kittens or played Death Race 2000 roadkillin' blacktop-strollin' cats and dogs.. or those "minions of the law" who turned their backs on those 1000s of yearly "runaways" (read: missing milkcarton children) and all those "clumsy kids," the battered 'n' blackeyed'n' brokenlegged 'n' brokenarmed 'n' burned -- the ones you WERE or went to school with and you KNEW, but if the authorities ADMITTED it wasn't self-induced devastation, then they just labeled it "family discipline," and the ones that couldn't take it and ran away got locked up and branded as "incorrigibles" and got beat some more and maybe raped or broomhandled....

YEAH. DANNY. GO WIN ONE FOR ALL THE
SCARRED AND SCARED AND SAVAGED... AND FOR
ALL THE ONES BURIED ALONG THE FORGOTTEN
HIGHWAYS OF OUR INDIFFERENT, SELF-RIGHTEOUS
PAST....

Sometimes in those sleepless, paintwitching, nightmare-sweating hours long past midnight, it kinda makes y' fantasize, there's only THE GUILTY AND THE DEAD...

When the only "secret friend" your "inner child" is ever gonna need is CHAINGANG.

SO BUY A COUPLE COPIES, THREE FOR GOOD
MEASURE. YOU'RE GONNA WEAR ONE RAGGEDY-

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ASSED IN NO TIME....
YEAH. UNFORGETTABLE.

iW-D; Okay, Rex! Yet another blockbuster! Now, without spilling any "FOR YOUR EYES ONLY" type state secrets, cin you give us any tidbits about your next one due from Pocket (we gotta wait another freakin' HALF A YEAR...?), Savant?

REX: Two of the most efficient serial killers, one an "idiot
suvant," the other a Savant of sorts, do pitched battle like two
enraged polars on the same tiny ice flow. The sub-theme
incorporate my second attempt to write about the radio biz.
(W-D: Can't wait, man, it sounds like you 've got another killer
wildass bronco of a book just waitin' to rampage out of the
gate... hold on to your hats, all you Drugstore Cowboys, ' cause
the Miller Man's got the R(e)X for yet another MAJOR
HEADTRIP INTO FEARZONE BEYOND THE COMFORTS

OF "YEA THOUGH I WALK THRU THE VALLEY O'
DEATH..."

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REX TALKS ABOUT WRITERS AND WRITING.

Rex: Speaking of "Drugstore Cowboy," just made me think of
The Man in Grey, The Chairman of the Board himself, William
S, Burroughs (you catch my ref, right? I mean WSB played the
junkie priest in the film of the same name). When someone
asks me about literary influences, we usually rap about the
movie matinee and radio serials and the hardboiled
crime writers, as we already did, but there's another influence
4 well that may sound a little crazy when you first hear it from
me, but I read the Beats, and they had a major impact on my
perceptions. I read all of Burroughs! early stuff, his William
Lee-pseudonym stuff, Junkie: Confessions of an Unredeemed
Drug Addict, the bits and pieces that would later become his
groundbreaking experimental novels, Naked Lunch, The Soft
Machine, etc.

iW-D: Rex, if you HADN'T 'fessed up to being a Burroughs
fanatic, at least at SOME point, I'd' ve thought you were tryin'
10 slip one over on ol' Dr. D-mented, here. Your own work,
your textual stream-of-consciousness segues, your total
conviction to taking the reader all the way down into the dark-
core confessional of the human heart, exposing the corruption
and the abusers and the pain without apology, reminds me, in
4 very positive literary and moral sense with WSB's works.
What Normal Mailer said in defense of Naked Lunch at
Burroughs' obscenity trial for same comes to mind:

"Just as Hieronymus Bosch set down the most
diabolical and blood-curdling details with a
delicacy of line and a Puckish humor which left

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one with a sense of the mansions of horror attendant upon Hell, so, too, does Burroughs leave you with an intimate, detailed vision of what Hell must be like..." "...Nowhere, as in Naked Lunch 's collection of monsters, half-mad geniuses, cripples, mountebanks, criminals, perverts, and putrefying beasts is there such a modern panoply of the vanities of the human will, of excesses of evil which occur when the idea of personal or intellectual power reigns superior to the compassions of the flesh. We are richer for that record."

Hell, Rex, he could've been describing any of YOUR books, Slob, Frenzy, Stone Shadow, Profane Men, Slice, Iceman, Chaingang... or your forthcoming Savant and the many more we're sure to see from you--

REX:--Thanks, Damon, I truly appreciate your comparison, but jeez, you're gettin' me all choked up with all this literary adulation and jazz... Anyway, I was also deeply impressed by those writers. Kerouac: I read Mexico City Blues in manuscript, at the New City Lights Bookstore in Houston. Or I didn't. Who can be certain so many years later, and so what if I'm lying? Let's see you PROVE IT. Greg Corso, Larry Ferlinghetti, Kenny Rexroth. Interesting cats. I was young and impressionable and the stuff opened up my sinuses. It was like reading a boy's novel dipped in acid, or a Robert W. Service poem written by somebody who'd just snorted a couple of ounces of Colombian Indoor Ski Lift: The Hardy Boys on Mescaline. Basically just middle class lets-get-jazzed, rape-the-waiter, and drive-real-fast-with-the-lights-off, with 160 1.Q.s and nerves of ice, and such command of words. Blessed Jesus, the wordstream and ferocity. It echoed or prefigured Ellison, that same fierce honesty, the forward rush of his narrative, the uncompromisingly razor-sharp insights, with a voice that could ring like an alarm clock or whisper secrets of the human -- and

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INHUMAN condition... I devoured the Brave New World of ideas and form and content set forth in his Dangerous Visions, and the New Wave SF stylistic radicals of Moorcock's New Worlds, as well.

(W-D: Speaking (tangentially) of SF, could you fill us in on what system you've used in the past, and what you're using

ow to write. You're still a devotee of lowtech, too, aren't you -- pounding it all out on your trusty toughguy manual 1 YPEWRITER, foregoing such pussywhipped appliances as a WP or PC, right? (In the grand tradition of such high-output dudes as Gentleman Jerry the Hoosier Horror Meister and Wild Bill Nolan...)

Hey, but wait minute, your latest missives appear to have up-jeched just a bit -- I thought you 'd said something about an old manual typewriter somewhere, either in your correspondence or in an earlier review. But the latest batch of Miller-mania poodies you winged my way looks "computer," or "smart \typewriter," at the very least? Facts, Ma(n), just the facts -- model, serial #, the whole scam (seriously, what ARE you using?). Has Rex gone Cyber...?

REX: Nah, same old ancient IBM Personal Wheelwriter.
iW-D: Rex, SNAP QUIZ: If you were to name a half dozen or so of your favorite authors?"

REX: Not counting Shakespeare and Joyce and those cats? If we're talking about contemporary fiction I'd go with the guys who are the most realistic, the tough crime writers such as Vachss, Izzi, Leonard, Higgins, and so forth. Oh, yeah, of course, Thomas Harris -- every ball the man hits goes out of the park.

tW-D: Favorite books?

REX: Suttree by Cormack McCarthy. Field of Blood by Gerald Seymour. All the "Burke" novels. Guy Davenport's Every Force Evolves a Form -- amazing essays and lectures. Richard Bissell's river books. Le Carre's "Smiley" novels. Human Factor. You start a list like this and there's no ending. Immediately a Doctorow or Levin or Puzo comes to mind.

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tW-D: How about folks in the Horror genre per se...?

REX: Easy. That ol' asskickin' Nacogdoches, Texas farmby hisself. J.O.E. L.A.N.S.D.A.LE. All bullshit aside, and I' vs said this before, when I first read some of Joe's books, they knocked me right into the wastebasket. He's totally his owi bad self, with the best Twain, Harry Crews, Edwin Shrake, anid Richard Bissell in there somewhere, too. Must be a crowded sumbitch inside his haid, t-bone. Whatcha think? Like Kinj he's an absolutely NATURAL storyteller. I'd hardly classily them as horror writers, by the way, just because the gent accepts them. Master Troubadours. Tough and funny, too!

tW-D: Sounds like someone else I've been talking with -- eh, Rex...?. and from his inside-cover quote for Chaingang, talking about Slob, I take it Joe's a fan of your work, too: "Raw as 4 sucking wound, mean as a snake, cold as the inside of a meal

freezer... Rex Miller is a major new writer with a unique, personal vision."

REX: Everything a person needs to know about Joe Lansdale is in the introduction to the CD hardcover reprint of Act o/ Love.

tW-D: You're often compared to such legendary writers as Thomas Harris, Jim Thompson and Ernest Hemingway. You've already mentioned your enthusiasm for the work of Thomas Harris, but you haven't mentioned Thompson or Hemingway. Have you read much of their work? If so, can you mention any favorite books or stories by them, and do you have a preference for their novels or their shorter fiction? Are your impressions at the comparison of your works to theirs favorable? Do you feel any conscious influence from these sources?

REX: I've read nearly everything they've written, I believe, or at least a sufficient amount of each man to know I'm not in their respective literary leagues. I don't take comparisons too seriously. My goal was to be as non-derivative a writer as I could, but I certainly am influenced by all the authors you've named, to varying degrees. And I feel influenced by military histories, too.

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iW.1; Say, Rex, I know someone I thought you' d mention for sive: a name Paul Sammon invoked when comparing your wilting... What do you think of James Ellroy?

WX: He's swell.

{W-D; What about Killer On The Road?

WIEX: Wonderful. Riders on the Storm, too. I loved the Doors. Hut I've read memorable Ellroy. The--er-um--what 's it called--ihe "colostomy?" The Black Dahlia, The Big Nothing. No iteally. I'm crazy about some of his work. The shorter things especially. Blood On The Moon. Seminal stuff.

iW-D; Let me make a quick aside, a verbal notation, here, for wiybody out there who's unfamiliar with Ellroy's books. Originally titled, "Silent Terror," it's been rereleased and jepackaged with the new handle, tho' the freakin' inside of the hook still reads "SILENT TERROR" on every damn right-hand page heading: Talk about BIZARRE MARKETING! and, although I'm a big personal fan of his noire nuances and ultra-hardboiled crime narrative (NO. NOT AS HARD-HWOILED AS REX, OKAY? NOW, WILL Y' QUIT ELBOW-ING ME IN THE GUT, REX?), the much-touted Killer On The Road a.k.a. Silent Terror was, I believe, his first novel -- and it shows. After reading all of Rex's Books and short stories (at the rate this guy pounds the keys -- not in yer life, right?), and all of Andrew Vachss! books, then I would suggest trying [llroy's linked period-piece "quintology" -- Clandestine, The Black Dahlia, The Big Nowhere, L.A. Confidential, and White

Jazz -- set in a very gritty Lala Land of '40s and '50s yesteryear... and his Det. Sergeant Lloyd Hopkins novels -- Blood On The Moon (filmed as Cop, with James Woods -- yeah, i'm a BIG Woods fan -- this my second fave role of his, after consciousness-slipping sleazoid Max Renn in Cronenberg's mindwarping cult classic, Videodrome...), Because The Night, Suicide Hill -- and Brown's Requiem...

REX: You call that a quick aside? You sounded for a moment like you wanted to have Ellroy's baby, and also -- who's freakin' interview is this, darn it. Let me level with you: I've

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loathed that putz since I learned he was the Howling Dog al Death. I wanted to be the Howling Dog of Death, and dammit this means I have to settle for the Great Big Woofing Puppy o! the Terminally Sick. (I wonder if I could say I was the Barkiny Bard of Bibliotic Bale? Nah.) But, seriously, a fine writer, and a credit to his race -- ...the fucking Klingons, all right?

tW-D: Hmmm. Either this is a SEVERE case of deja vu, o! else you saw the same cable special I did -- what was it? the Raymond Chandler retrospective...? -- the one Ellroy hosted (keeeeerist, and I thought I dreamed that one, man!), where he came on like the "Prancing Pipsqueak of Pussydom," a good buddy of mine termed him....

REX: Well, the way he was runnin' that limping jailhouse shuck, you kinda wanted to take that little turkey and rip his ugly melon off and shove his stump through the nearest sheetrock...

tW-D: Yeah, and for my dime, Mr. Crime, REX IS THE HOWLING HELLD OG, and you wanna go mano a mano with Killer Miller for the championship title, it's fly you'll be eatin' prairie-pie, BIGTIME, EAST PRAIRIE, that is... so GIVE IT UP, MUTHUH, like it or DIE....

REX: Earth to Damon... Earth to Damon... The invaders from Planet Garbanzo X have not yet landed, lad, get a grip! Level-out, old t-square....

tW-D: Rex, we've been clowning around a bit, having fun, and letting your fans see the lighter side of Killer Miller, one of those facets of your personality that I get a big kick out of, and that I believe nearly everyone I've contacted researching your work has mentioned -- you're a good-natured and truly funny guy.

But there's another important element of your psyche -- your serious side, and, to return to a subject you couldn't be more serious about -- child abuse of the helpless. It's the driving

force that brings you back to your typer, pounding out your trademark, in-your-face-fiction, and the one thing I simply can't underscore enough, if your fans want to understand the man behind the myth....

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\$0, before we discuss your short fiction, I'd like to talk to

you about a directly related subject I know has been very important to you. In fact, many of your readers may not be 'ware, except for the brief mention in my introduction, but this common cause has helped bring you together with another very well-known, hardboiled crime writer, whom you've been a fan of for years -- "Mr. Ice" himself, Andrew Vachss! Your styles are, indeed, quite different, suggesting references to your collaboration as the team of "Fire and Ice," but your shared concern for abused kids more than bridges any stylistic differences. Would you be willing to tell us all a bit concerning how that came about, what kind of project you two have been involved in, and where to look for these sure-to-be collectors' items...?

REX: All right. First you have to understand that Vachss! HOBBY is writing, his WORK involves a law practice limited to children and youth and related matters. He lectures and writes extensively on the subject of abused children and probably understands as much about the complex subject as any clinician. It's from years of dedication to helping kids that dates back to a stint for the World Health Organization in Angola, to landmark court cases involving youth, in which he's represented -- in at least one case -- an unborn baby. Vachss is a protector. His sworn enemy is the predatory pedophile. Somebody once described Andrew as having "the soul of the warrior and the heart of a poet." Corny as it may sound, that's accurate. His Dark Horse book Another Chance To Get it Right embodies and reflects both attributes in an unforgettable way. It's truth pure as Haiku.

Andrew's gospel is simple and clearly stated and restated: "Today's victim is tomorrow's predator." He wants predators put in a place where they can't get out, basically, and we agree on a lot of things related to such matters. By dumb luck I reached the same conclusions academically, that he did through first-hand experience. Because I did a lot of research using the Diagnostical Statistical Manuals in their various revised formats

the bibles of the psychiatric community -- I chanced upon

what seemed to me an astonishing omission. Nowhere in all the material I read did I see the word "evil." Vachss also finds that extraordinary. It was in fact a key to the secret heart of the serial killer, Chaingang Bunkowski, and the way in which he is perceived by "Dr. Norman" (the clinical establishment). A true sociopathic mutant, a truly malignant, evil human, can be created.

It's as if society has a secret assembly line going and the family services people don't want to do anything to break the chain. Judges do a fine job, too, keeping the production line moving smoothly. Any day now you'll have child abuser or animal torturer living next door (if not already). They're not just welfare mokes, or blue collar, or career recidivists; every day somebody's priest, high school principal, Scoutmaster, day care center proprietor, minister, or coach is charged and their actions are revealed and we learn about another lifetime of abuse or molestation. The bureaucracy's idea of protecting kids is to emphasize a program of immunization, or beef up Head Start. What world are they living in? So people who feel strongly about these matters are drawn to each other -- writing styles is not what this is about.

He's a good friend and we've done some writing together, along with James Colbert. Dark Horse Comics has purchased our short story Shadow of the Cross and our novel, Crossover. In Crossover, the book I just finished with Andrew and James Colbert, we've had a chance to mutually explore some of the darker corners of a human mutant, a flower of evil nurtured by choice.

tW-D: I know all your fans, and those of Andrew Vachss -- you know I for one am a big fan of both your work -- will want to be sure not to miss out on the meeting of "Fire and Ice"!

—i

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MORE RAPPIN' WITH REX
AND OUR BIZARRE BIBLIOGRAPHY
OF HIS SHORT WORKS

(W-D: Rex, as astounding as your output of novel-length manuscripts is, you've still found the time to create a staggering body of short-fiction work, as well -- always coming through with something new and unexpected for all those magazine and anthology editors who just have to secure the rights to a Rex Miller story for their pet project...

Thanks to a constantly amended list of updates from Rex,

I've tried to put together a semi-complete bibliography of his short fiction (we both know we're bound to have overlooked a few, but is it any wonder...?) for all you Miller completists (a lifework in itself, collecting the Complete Works....):

American Cyclo: Midnight Graffiti, Fall 1992 issue. A savage parody of Brett Easton Ellis* much-overrated American Psycho- Pure madcap, mindwhacked Miller to the max -- DON'T MISS THIS ONE!

Bleeding Hearts: REX MILLER's CHAINGANG COMICS #2. AAARRGGGHHHHH! The original release, from Northstar, is gonna be (I mean: already is...) one of the reddest hottest collectibles in Miller-dom. Il-fated distribution by Northstar Publishing-- if you've got a copy, lock it up; if you haven't, Babycakes, better do some desperate recon, FAST... (I still am....).

16 t. WINTER-DAMON

Blood Drive: Dracula: Prince of Darkness, edited by Martin H

Greenberg, DAW Books' vampire antho. September 1992, \$4.99. ISBN 0-88677-531-0. _ Introduction by Stefan Dziemianowicz. Some excellent and quirky twists in tales by John Shirley, Brian Hodge, Wayne Sallee, Daniel Ransom, Bentley Little, with many other familiar horror, fantasy and mystery voices such as Matthew J. Costello, Richard Laymon, F. Paul Wilson, John Lutz, and P.N. Elrod. But Rex's story, here, has gotta take the prize for utter weirdness -- a hip and harrowing, post-apocalyptic vision of "V." Catch these opening, lines for a taste of what's to come:

Night in the besieged city: a coven of thirsty river gullymen, lips bloodied in crimson sludge fresh and tacky as 10W40 times glue, sat idling under a Vaseline Alley arc, its pale light bathing the street below in weird lavender.

Aletha, her Barbie waist bound in silver chain, posed on the hood of the lead burner.

"Come on," she whined, her full lips arched in the arc light.

From an unseen speaker, Fogbound Dogpound rocked "Clumsy Stumblin Barefoot Rattler Round-Up Blues" out of a high-end audio.

They were stalkers. They could almost smell their target across Barlow inside Fastfood, and every time J'Velle caught a glimpse of her

shapely brown legs in white sandals, or her edible bulge of calf and curvaceous thigh, he made a low growl in his throat. Tasting it. The luminous clock on the dash of his command burner moved its minute hand to 10:02. Across the blacktop he could see they were shutting down for the night.

There were thirteen of them driving four stripped-down dune jobs. A full mill, four-barrel Fisher 660 on a tubular shell chassis with frame seats, tank, racing slicks, roll bars, and a jolly

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roger on the whip. Flat black burners meant to do only one thing.
You saw a quad convoy of black buggies

roaring through the night you had no question who it was...

Hox 69: Hottest Blood, subtitled, The Ultimate in Erotic Terror, edited by Jeff Gelb and Michael Garrett. Pocket Books, January 1993. ppdb., 256 pgs. \$5.50. ISBN 671-75367-3. Sizzling 10 page story about love with the wrong?/right? stranger. Other perverse and twisted tales here, too (no, of course not the kind of thing you'd be into, right, Gentle Readers?), from Dave Schow, John Shirley, Nancy Holder, thomas Tessier, Bentley Little, Graham Watkins, Graham Masterson, Matt Costello, Don D'Amassa, John Edward Ames, Elizabeth Massie, Steve and Melanie Tem, Ron Dee,

Cielb, Garrett, and crew.... DEFINITELY A "DON'T MISS" ANTHO!

Bunky: Shock Rock, edited by Jeff Gelb, with a forward by Alice Cooper. Pocket Books, January 1992, \$4.99. ISBN 671-70150-9. | 1-pg. story. Also scheduled for German release (Shock Rock's

been sold for reprint there) -- good marks, folks! Gelb and Ciarrett lookin" strong!

(W-D: Bunky in Shock Rock was picked up for graphic novelization, right, Rex?

REX: Right. Marc Paoletti and Chris Lacher are going to reprint it in their System Shock graphic novel series. A portion of the proceeds are supposed to be donated to abused and/or neglected kids, so I was especially glad to contribute one of my stories.

tW-D: I was intrigued by Rex's mention of this project, so I spoke with Marc Paoletti, later (03/03/'93), by phone, to see if he could supply any updates on the progress of the series, etc.

Marc says he'd been so intrigued by Graham Masterson's

78 t. WINTER-DAMON

widely acclaimed Scare Care anthology (ALL profits of same went directly to several children's charities and were handled by the Scare Care Trust: Scare Care, TOR Books, June 1989, \$19.95, ISBN #0-312-93156-5) that he contacted Graham to find out details of how he'd handled the donation aspect, etc., while he was still in the planning stages for System Shock. A\ the time I spoke with Marc, he expected the first issue to release "in about two months," and said to watch for Bunky in either issue #2 or #3 -- stay tuned for further details, and watch for it -- other authors in the series are rumored to include Bob Bloch, Ramsey Campbell, R.C. Matheson, and F. Paul Wilson...).

Another excellent work building on Rex's radio-biz expertise. Tune in to the station and "Scream to the beat," like the cover

SEZ:

"Whooooooooaaaaa, Jenny, Jenny!" Mitch Rider boppin' out along the quadruplexing Z-band-oh, man, ain't nobody ever could do it bad as Mitch Rider, am I right or what? Jenny got her blue dress on. Jenny take a ride. Shit, Jim, that fucker's cookin' like a bandit, and I pop for the mike.

"Whoa, Joan! Hold the phone! This is rad, 'n' bad to the bone!"

Segue the straight a cappella and into a spot cluster? No way, Doctor Jay. I kill the spots and blast right back into the past. You're a bitch, Mitch, but wham-bam, Sam, Jimi show y' how to jam. Profundity and ideational lightning bolts. It's the night of the living-dead rockers. Finger boogie-rama.

"Get some Morrison," I tell the gainrider. Do I love it here or what? X-ROQ. Big time, Hoss. X-Rock. Clear channel on Z-band, 250,000 powerhertz outta Villanueva, Mexico. "Hold it one, Dude, I gotta get my log down.

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Yeah. THIS IS ONE GRRRRREAT (Tony the Tiger, I ain't, am I right...? Mebbe t. Winter-Wildcat...?) ANTHO --

Stephen King, Dave Schow, Brian Hodge, Nancy Collins, R. Patrick Gates, F. Paul Wilson, Graham Masterson, Ray Garton, John Shirley, Tessier, Ronald Kelly, R.C. Matheson. I mean we have us some folks here that KNOW Rock, Doc, or what? BUT OLT UNCLE REX HE JUS! BLOWS 'EM ALL AWAY, "BUNKY" -- I mean, do dem size 1SEEEEEEE bata boots mean anything to y'? DON"T MISS THIS ONE! GREAT ANTHO. Like de back cover sez: "ROCK AND ROLL IS HERE TO SLAY..."

Burn: Another wildass Spike Jones story (see Spike Jones and the Rev. Sister Claudine, \ater...), in collaboration with Midnight Graffiti editor, Jessie Horsting. Deathrealm #18, June 1993 issue in conjunction with our interview, REX MILLER: BEYOND CHAINGANG. Deathrealm #19, September 1993 (c/o TAL Publications, P.O. Box 1837, Leesburg, VA 22075: \$4.95 single copy; \$15.95 year <4 issues>; \$27.95 2 year <8 issues>). For anyone not familiar, Deathrealm (Mark Rainey, Editor) is a critically acclaimed, award-winning zine publishing "earth-shattering fiction by the best and brightest in the genre" - CHECK IT OUT!

The Cereal Killer. Dick Tracy, The Secret Files, edited by Max Allan Collins and Martin H. Greenberg, TOR, June 1990, ppdb., \$4.95. ISBN 0-812-51010-0. A neat little tale (26 pgs.) demonstrating both Rex's now-notorious, twisted (read: SERIOUSLY BENT) sense of humor and his love and knowledge of the radio serials. Another great twist is making Junior Tracy the protag, in lieu of this illustrious adoptive Dad, Dick! A sample from the opening lines:

It is just after dusk, but in the small lab near Crown Western Broadcasting, where the fat man works, time has no meaning.

— —

80 t. WINTER-DAMON

The fingers are those of a human who has devoted his life to gluttony in all its multifarious shapes. Disgustingly fat, repulsively soft fingers probe at the bottom of a rectangular package. The digits appear to be of a consistency that suggests nothing firmer than Jell-O. Flabby appendages on the doughy hands of a person who lives only for gratification.

Crossover. Forthcoming from Dark Horse Comics. A Cross/ Chaingang novel, written py Andrew Vachss, Rex Miller and James Colbert, will first appear as a graphic novel. Vachss and Miller co-own all other rights to the book, which feature Cross and other characters trademarked by Andrew Vachss, and Chaingang, a trademark of Rex Miller.

Dead Issue: Borderlands 2, edited by Thomas F. Monteleone.
Avon Books in ppdb, December 1991, \$4.99. ISBN 0-380-76517-9; Borderlands Press, deluxe hdbd (signed by all, custom dj illo by pal, Rick Lieder), \$60.00 (+ \$3.00 S&H, to: Borderlands Press, P.O. Box 32333, Baltimore, MD 21208) -- better grab tem while they last, this one's bound to be a real collector's item! 10-page story. A savagely brilliant and mentally scarring in-your-face POV exploring the obsessive-compulsive nature and no-limits brutality of a VERY ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP... as ONLY Killer Miller could tell it-- a dramatic example of what Rex terms "writing AT the reader." A MUST HAVE....

_Jt was black cocktail dress under the coat and he slipped his hand inside. Her body felt warm. He stiffened, imagining what it would be like later to stuff his maleness into her mouth, choke her with his masculinity. He smiled, feeling the heat and growing hardness as he touched her, thinking about her taking him in her mouth later. How he'd make her swallow it. Her pale, smooth, alabaster skin, so soft and sleek and

JUL,

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unblemished. She looked like a teenybopper when she was naked. Little flat tits and a young girl's high, firm ass.

At the stop sign he pulled her to him, kissing her roughly, kissing her closed mouth as hard as he could.

"You make me hot for you," he breathed.

"Good," she said, startled. He looked back and pulled out onto the highway.

"Yeah," he said and suddenly pulled over again, right on the shoulder of the road in front of all the traffic and started making out with her like he was about to take her clothes off right there and put it to her in the middle of traffic.

ae got horny," she laughed into his mouth sexily and he s
ae ae queezed her breast very

"Tongue." She obliged him.

"Let's go home," she purred.

"Tongue. Stick that fucking tongue in my mouth: They kissed some more. He imagined what her wet, red mouth would look like later. the look of that long, white throat as she licked and sucked.

"yt m going to make you eat a beautiful girl's cunt while I fuck you in the ass," he told her. He

was always threatening to make he do it with another woman, but she realized it was just pillow talk. She went along with it as usual.

"Okay. I'll go down on Linda for you," she told him. She knew he fantasized about her and their next door neighbor: a vacuous, somewhat Serre slut whom she wouldn't touch on a

et.

"Yeah. That'd make you hot, wouldn't it?" He pinched her breast through the thin fabric of the cocktail dress and the bra, really hurting her.

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82 t. WINTER-DAMON

No mercy, here. This is verite' with a vengeance: WE TAKE NO PRISONERS the sign above the razorwire warns, as the gateway yawns open into this one-way-ticket, escape-proof concentration camp of the shattered soul... From here on out, it's FICTION AT YOUR OWN RISK, TAKING THE DARK, SPIRALLING DESCENT ALLTHWAYDOWN INTO HELL,

KILLER MILLER STYLE...

Dead Standstill: Alfred Hitchcock 's Mystery Magazine, April 1990 issue. Rex switches voices here, with chameleon-like

adaptability, hot jazz riffs replaced by Musak-mellow tones, consumer-friendly to this massified, decidedly unhip reader-ship... again, proving Killer Miller is pure pro....

Dear Serena: Forthcoming. Collaboration with Ed Gorman. Sale not yet verified -- Watch for it!

The Sth Wall: Forthcoming in Whispers, Dr. Stuart David Schiff, Editor. The 3rd story in the "Dying Writer Trilogy." (As of 03/03/'93, I confirmed by phone this was slated for the "next

issue," per Dr. Schiff. He did not have the issue # readily at hand -- I spoke with him at his office, and he was very kind to break away from his patients for a moment to answer my queries as best he could -- and the order price had not yet been determined. If you're unfamiliar with it, award-winning Whispers is one of the most professionally packaged, longest-running and respected publications in the H /DF field. Order queries may be made to: Dr. Stuart David Schiff, Editor, 70

Highland Avenue, Binghamton, NY 13905.)

5: Forthcoming. In TOR Books' Superhero anthology, edited by Kurt Busiek and Lawrence Watt-Evans. (Working title as of 03/03/!93 is Behind the Mask, pending publisher's approval -- special thanks to Kurt Busiek for the insider tip!).

Interview With The Censored Vampire: Gauntlet #2. Dept. 91,

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ee oe Springfield, PA 19064. \$8.95. 3-pg. humorous
tn a gay vampire, in over-si
, ized format. M

- Nene CHAINGANG fan(g) club's cup o' blood Bia
p romp that Miller Maniacs'Il get a kick out of :
I've Got Hugh Under My fi
fy Skin: Forthcoming i
Frankenstein, edited by Martin H. Greenberg and Ed Gonuan

The Lincoln-Kennedy Cc p cy edi ed by Ed Gorman
OnS piracy: Solved t
,

and Martin H. Greenberg. Carroll & Graf, 1991, hdbd \$21 95

ISBN 0-88184-689- :

Fred L. King. 9. Collaborative story: Rex Miller and Dr.

Bp Luckiest Man in the World: Masques LIT, edited by J.N

Williamson, St. Martin's Press, 1989, hdbd. \$17.95 ISBN 0.

Grecnbory . pits for reprint in Ed Gorman and Marty
ec rimes 2, Carroll & Graf, 1993

sin a 0-88 164 865-4 believe the ae on this one :

; - -919-7. 9 pg.

ot for all Chaingang freaks! lee a aa

re... wink. wink. Know what I mean..?" (--Monty Python.)

Miss December: Stalkers i
: vers, edited by Ed Gorman and i

ee nee oak a oe December 1990 re
95. -45 1 - "5. 2 i io
Subtitled, (A Jack Eichord ee eke tie

Dig the leadoff, here i
, , taki z
Mondo Bizarro a la Miller. ng us down fast and hard into

Eichord felt a 5 i

pasm of pain from the crick i
his neck and took the killer phone from his ear,
: oving, his head slowly, back and forth, hearing
" _ hee then a pop, and listening again
ls head tilted dangerously to the ri
I e right.

: oe to an ordinary conimunteition ite
ut this electronic, plastic pound of horrors that

B4 t. WINTER-DAMON

sat on his desk was Alex Bell's death ray. He
was convinced that AT&T was using the instru-
ment to bring about his agonizing demise. He
had a killer phone and a killer hangover.

Mouthtrap: Forthcoming. Bizarre Bazaar 94, the anthology that
Doug Coulson, The Barrelhouse, called "An all out anc es
the senses." Available March 1994, TAL Publications, P.O
Box 1837, Leesburg, VA 22075. \$6.95.

Nasty Times: Gauntlet #1. Dept. 91, 309 Powell Rd,
Springfield, PA 19064. \$8.95.

Non-Skid Jacks* The D.C.-Saigon Connection: Solved, edited by
Ed Gorman and Martin H. Greenberg. Carroll & Graf, 1991,
hdbd, \$21.95. ISBN 0-88184-689-9. (12-pg. story.) Rex's
proficiency with the high-tech espionage /conspiracy mixed
genre, as demonstrated in Profane Men and more recently in
Chaingang, slides him allthewayhome with a sizzlin' grand slam
in this antho "Wherein great mystery writers crack classic
unsolved crimes." A brief teaser to whet your collective

imaginations:

I CTZ/Quang Tin/Chu Lai Taor/Northern
Sector:

"COME ON, LADIES," Gunny screams over
the noise, "LET'S GET HER DONE NOW."
Black Huey slicks, unmarked. Blackbirds from
the armed chopper company, cobra gunships,
joining them for escort, and the air is a madness

of turbine and rotor noise.

The fireteams comprising the strike force element of Operation Green River climb aboard their baking bubbles of high tech transport.

USMACV. The Army. Navy. The Crotch.
The Air Force. The intelligence community.

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Even the private sector is represented in this weird lash-up. Every unit, group, or agency involved with the prosecution of the war effort seems to have a dirty thumb in the pie. Elite special forces people. Mercs. Headhunters. SEALS. A combined-forces/JCS op run out of the big spook complex on Magic Mountain.

Yeah. You get the picture, huh? ANOTHER MIND-MANGLER. EAT IT UP, DRUGSTORE COWBOYS! IT'S A DEFINITE MEGA-HEADTRIP HEADRIP....

PC. Retrofix: Gauntlet #3. Dept. 91, 309 Powell Rd., Springfield, PA 19064. \$8.95. 4-pg. wryly humorous article on the subject of just how far reason (or unreason) may lead us in the attempt to make literature and language "politically correct." Includes "REX 'S HOUSE DICTIONARY '" sidebar.

The Prick of Thorn: Narrow Houses, subtitled Tales of Superstition, Suspense and Fear. An exceptionally attractive and well-produced, 140,000-word hdbd. anthology, edited by Peter Crowther, with a preface by Douglas E. Winter and introductory poem by Ray Bradbury. Little, Brown and Company, 165, Great Dover Street, London SE1 4YE, England. December 1992, L 15.99. Stories by Ramsey Campbell,, Christopher Fowler, Jonathan Carroll, Stephen Gallagher, the always-wild Nancy A. Collins, Chet Williamson, Nick Royle, Pat Cadigan, Rick Hautala, William F. Nolan, Andrew Vacchs, Ian Macdonald, Dave Silva, Steve Rasnic Tem, mutual pal J.N. Williamson, and numerous others.

(Yet another not-so-quick aside, here: I've gotta say, Pete is one Helluva helpful and kindly editor, whom I had the opportunity to speak with by phone, on several occasions, while putting together this article. Similar calls between Pete and Rex had led to a bit of good-natured cross-banter, as mentioned in the Miller bio-intro therein: on Pete's part contending

Rex's persistent segue into (a voice) "parodying the accents one associates with British films of the 1940s"; on Rex's par, lauding, "The editor's personal courage in the face of serious adversity and perversity may not be widely known. It's a tribute to him that he has been able to achieve such heights in spite of the crushing debilitating effects of a peculiar malady marked by the persistent belief that the sufferer (hears such voices....)". This one's another tribute to Rex's ability to shill gears into a "traditional, quiet horror mode," when the market place calls for it. I WOULD HIGHLY RECOMMEND THIS ANTHO, the first in a series edited by Pete, himself a widely published novelist, short-fiction writer, poet, reviewer/interviewer, member of Horror Writers of America and Private Eye Writers of America, in addition to his editorial prowess!

Reunion Moon: Splatterpunk: Extreme Horror, edited by Paul M. Sammon. St. Martin's Press, trade ppbd, \$14.95. ISBN 0-312-04581-6. An original 7-page story in "oversized" format. This One is ABSOLUTELY Rex's grossest story yet in print! It's the world's worst case of constipation meets voodoo-mambo and revenge-story plot... As Paul Sammon puts it: "Prepare yourself for a whole new spin on the term bathroom humor." A LANDMARK ANTHO--BUY IT!

7 Levels of Hell: Rex Miller's Chaingang Comics #1. Yet another of the reddest hottest collectibles in Miller-dom. Again, ill-fated distribution by Northstar Publishing -- (I could KICK MYSELF -- somehow, I missed picking this one up when it first released, now I'm doin' a long scope tryin' to snag a copy...)

Sewercide: Forthcoming in Fear Itself, edited by Jeff Gelb, Warner Books. Eichord/Chaingang completists take note: this one's told from a woman's POV -- although Eichord appears only briefly, at the denouement, the antagonist is the son of Chaingang!

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The Shock Rock Jock: Forthcoming in Shock Rock 2 (what else?), edited by Jeff Gelb. This one's linked to Rex's radio daze -- anyone familiar with such legendary jocks as Don Imus and Howard Stern (or Killer Miller) should get a particular kick outta this one...

Sideways: Forthcoming. J P.1.*, first of the three "Mickey Spillane Anthologies," edited by Max Allan Collins and Martin H. Greenberg.

Sikeston, Missouri: Freakshow, edited by F. Paul Wilson for Horror Writers of America. Pocket Books in ppbd and Borderlands Press in deluxe hdbd edition, signed by all (\$75.00

+ \$3.00 S&H: see order info under Dead Issue.)

Spike Jones & Rev. Sister Claudine: With some gentle collaboratory assistance from Jessie Horsting, Midnight Graffiti Anthology, Warner Books, 1992, ppbd, \$5.99. ISBN 0-446-36307-3. You think Rex is kamikaze on his own? Wait till you see what happens when you team him with the ever-demented editor of Midnight Graffiti!

Star Racer: Rex Miller's Chaingang Comics #3. DOUBLE AAARRRGGGHHHHH! Don't even bother to look for this one, 'cept maybe in some dusty corner of the TWILIGHT ZONE, say maybe down at "WONG's LOST AND FOUND EMPORIUM*" (a little tip o' the metaphorical hat to William F. Wu fans and Zonies...). NEVER RELEASED: UN-PUBLISHED. Northstar's much-rumored troubles put his Chaingang saga into extended limbo -- when's SOMEBODY gonna save it...?

Stations of the Cross: Forthcoming from Dark Horse Comics. Collaboration with Andrew Vachss and James Colbert, featuring Vachss! popular character Cross, who has appeared in numerous formats, and is scheduled for more, including other

88 t. WINTER-DAMON

Dark Horse Comics' projects. SOMEWHERE -- DOUBLE THE EXCITEMENT, WITH THIS KICKASS TEAMUP WATCH FOR IT, THIS ONE'S BOUND TO BE A SOLID GOLD COLLECTIBLE!

Surprise: Hotter Blood, More Tales of Erotic Horror, edited by Jeff Gelb and Michael Garrett. Pocket Books, January 1991. 11 pgs. giving us a very HARD look at the story of the proverbial "man who has everything," taking a grab for a little extra on the side, and we're off into Miller's Cyclone zone, spinnin' out of control harder... faster... deeper... Witness:

She had coaxed him out of his controlled facade, turned him, made him so hot he forgot to stifle his inhibitions, reached down into the darkest corner and pulled the wild and nasty and twisted Warren out of there. Made him sit up and beg for it and roll over and be her puppy-Jeezus, who's kidding here, she was his slave? He was hers. He'd do anything for this beautiful, kinky bitch lover.

"I'm Daddy's girl," she said, putting on, playing little nympho Lolita, doing what some beautiful women do so well, so achingly well, so organically, naturally, enticingly, heartbreakingly well, and she smiled coquettishly; she pouted, preened, posed, played like she was a fast,

fuckable fourteenybopper, and she touched him like a man touches a woman, controlling, manipulating him, her incredible cover-girl face, movie-queen bananorama face, seductive stiffener of a tanned, young, Ipanema-beach-bossa-nova face that said let me eat your lips and suck on your delicious ice cream cone of a mouth-a mouth opening and a tongue coming out and

touching him just so.

* kK

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and it keeps getting HOTTER & HOTTER...

Sweet Pea: Midnight Graffiti Spring 1989 issue. Deluxe, full-size magazine format. 6 pgs. plus 2 full-pg. illos -- including the ONE AND ONLY ILLO (skillfully rendered by Rodger Gerberding), picturing Chaingang as Rex visualizes him... A classic. I mean, with a lead-off like this:

He stood carefully until he was sure his massive weight was distributed properly, and that the weak ankle wasn't letting that big foot turn outward with is weight as he took a few cautious steps, testing it. No problem.

Soon as he could he'd get his boots off. Soak his feet. Dry tem good. Put powder on. He had dry socks in a sealed plastic bag. Dry feet and high ground. A big meal to fill that growling, obvoluted gut. A long rest and then -- with luck -- he would find a vulnerable human and home in on that provocative rhythm of life force, the

heartbeat that would draw him like a beacon in the night.

ANOTHER ABSOLUTE, TOTAL "MUST" f
CHAINGANG FREAKS! "

Trigger Happy: Cold Blood antho, edited by Richard Chizmar. Published by Mark V. Zeising Books (P.O. Box 76, Shingletown. CA 96088), 1991. Trade Edition ISBN 0-929480-57-0; Signed and Limited Edition ISBN 90-072038. The fastest gun meets his match -- one of the guys is "Trigger" happy.

REX: (Gives a particularly wicked chuckle) Unlike some people I use an upper case "t" once in a while--
tW-D: Now what'n the Hell could he mean by THAT...?

Untitled Still Life with Infinity Perspective: Masques IV, edited by

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J.N. Williamson. Maclay and Associates (P.O. Box 16253, Baltimore, MD 21210), 1991, hbdb, \$19.95; Imtd ed. of 750, boxed, signed by all contribs, \$49.00. Pulphouse Publishing, Inc. (P.O. Box 1227, Eugene, OR 97440), trade ppbd (Story is 19 pgs.), \$12.95 (cover illo by Donna Gordon). Part of a trilogy-of sorts, three linked short tales experienced through the very strange reality-filters of a terminally ill writer. Jerry puts it most succinctly in his intro: "...It probes both madness and the nature(s) of reality." (and you think his Bunkowski stuff is over the top, amigos...? It's kinda like Cyber-Rex, or maybe what Cronenberg's version of The Naked Lunch'd be like if he'd dropped a megadose of Killer Acid and schizo'd into a Miller/Burroughs/Cronenberg MP (multiple personality...)). TOTAL MINDJERKER... ONE OF MY OWN PERSONAL NON-D.E.F.B. FAVES... HIGHLY RECOM-MENDED!

USMACVSAUCOG-CATM 1350: Stalkers I, edited by Ed Gorman and Martin M. Greenberg. Watch for it in the next volume of this incredibly successful series Stalkers and Predators from St. Martin's Press!

The Voice: Hot Blood, Tales of Provocative Horror, edited by Jeff Gelb and Lonn Friend. Pocket Books, May 1989. Selected for reprint in Edward Lee's (Lee's another KICKASS WRITER and a frequent TAL projects contributor -- if you haven't yet, catch a copy of his Edward Lee's Quest for Sex, Truth and Reality -- from TAL Publications, of course! -- \$5.95 + \$1.00 shipping) as-yet-unnamed "Poznanthology" (Rex's coined word) of American horror stories to be translated into Polish for CIA/Svaro, Poland, also currently being marketed as a hardcover project in Russia under the title New World Horror through Stan Tal's Literary Agency -- he's everywhere, he's everywhere -- (my Penetration Maximum is slated for same: shameless self-promotional plug....) The Voice, originally titled, Our Lady of the Boiler Room (man, I LOVE that title!-- WHY did Jeff change it...?), is 5 pages of highly compressed ultra-

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Miller prose... BADD TO THE BONE! I quote the opening paragraphs:

I am Dallas's Ruler of the Night, the voice in the shadows, whispering of stardust and moon-glow and bossa nova rhythm.

The scratchy cut be-bops through the coda and the automatic cart-light flashes a five-second cue as I wait to perform. The engineer pots me up full as the red light blinks and the final note

slides under my first words to the faithful.

"Cliffie Brown. Joy Spring." The hand behind the ear, old style. I smile up at the face on the other side of the double-paned glass. My engineer McVey punches up a spot and twangs into studio intercom:

Jazz-riff narrative that pulls you in reeeeeal tight, then

punches you allthewaydown into patented Miller Madness and Skull City Blues....

Valentine: collaboration with Daniel Ransom (a.k.a. the ever-busy Ed Gorman). Predators, Edited by Ed Gorman and Marty

Greenberg. ROC, February 1993, trade ppbd. \$10.00. ISBN 0-451-45246-1.

X: Deathrealm #19, September 1993 (c/o TAL Publications, P.O. Box 1837, Leesburg, VA 22075: \$4.95 single copy; \$15.95 year <4 issues>; \$27.95 2 year <8 issues>). Originally slated for inclusion in THIS missive, but Tal snatched it up first...

Well, talk about TRYING TO HIT A MOVING TARGET!
You no sooner get all Rex's antho and magazine sales duly noted and input, and he's sold another half dozen or so short Stories and maybe written another novel or been reprinted in

yet another foreign country -- WHOA! (Okay! I asked for it, didn't I, Rex...?)

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Rex has stories slated for Ed Gorman and Martin Greenberg's Stalkers IT and Stalkers IH, Shivers, Innovation Comics, and MANY MANY MORE major venues, as well as kindly lending his talents to the small press in Mean Lizards (an illustrated poem and other work)...

tW-D: Once again proving Truth is stranger than Fiction, despite Rex's ever-growing list of magazine and anthology sales, it may surprise many readers to learn Killer Miller probably turns down more short-fiction solicitations than he commits to. Time constraints, lack of a sufficiently interesting premise for theme anthos, failure of the soliciting editor to

professionally "package" his or her proposed project -- Many such ventures simply appear too tentative for a major writer to take time away from far more lucrative novel manuscripts to draft a highly specialized theme story, that, should the optimistic rush involved in marketing some off-the-wall concept fail to attract a major publisher, may not be a readily sellable product.

Rex and I usually have a good chuckle whenever we talk, trying to figure out where some of the screwball ideas come from the aspiring editor's hope to develop into the next MAJOR antho -- wired on visions of mega-buck deals for the next Dark Forces or Cutting Edge or Stalkers or Prime Evil, or a Hot Blood or Shock Rock multi-volume franchise (forgetting the aforementioned were all edited by MAJOR professionals with a proven track record and a highly informed overview of the industry and market trends....). Any comments on this one, Rex?

REX: Hell, t-square, I've come up with a Killer idea--

tW-D: What else could we expect?

REX: --I'm thinking on putting together an antho -- only looking for the writers' very best work, of course -- but springboarding from my opening paragraph: --

"Would you permit a small gratuity of my solitudinal if hideous evacuative functions?" he murmured, from the ostium

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which he utilized as a human mouth.

I'm offering top rates, too. Twenty-five cents per word, payable on publication -- just don't expect to bank anything on this deal within your lifetime...

tW-D: Rex, one final question; then I'll let you get back to work. Murdering and maiming and whatever... Much of your writing has been described as "over-the-edge." It could be said you 're actually writing AT the reader, in some instances, rather than FOR him. How would you answer that?

REX: Absolutely. I want the reader scared, jolted, angry -- whatever. I want that reaction, whether it's revulsion or fear I want that person to understand that if you take a child and fuck them, torture them, hurt and terrorize them, it doesn't ever go away. You make a "Chaingang" that way, and one night he'll come and find you, in your old age, or someone else, and do worse than you ever thought of, We're creating monsters all the time: Humans --by definition -- capable of acts more monstrous than any writer has yet put on paper. It's about VICTIMS. I want to get you pissed about those supercilious assholes who torture animals to perfect cosmetics.

I want you sickened by the notion that a judge will take a kid who has been sodomized repeatedly, and -- how many times a day does THIS happen? -- put that poor child right back in the same environment. I want you MAD that we have the worst collection of judges in the history of the judicial system. I want to leave you shaken, worried, concerned enough so that maybe the next time you see something happen in your city, or hear about an incident recounted on the evening news that the cumulative effect will be to push YOU over the edge, and galvanize you into action.

tW-D: Rex, thank you very much for sharing your time with all of us, I know I'VE had a ball rappin' with you -- and keep up the great work. And, thanks also to those who so kindly and generously helped supply material to assure our overview as complete as possible: Paul M. Sammon, Jeff Gelb, Tom Monteleone, Ed Gorman, Dr. Stuart David Schiff, Ms. Donald A. Wollheim, Kurt Busiek, Doug Grad, and....

Moths

NAGE VIDE!
REX MILLER
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EAST PRAIRIE, MO 63845
(314) 649-5048 10-10 CENTRAL

fu

osm

"RANDOLPH SCOTT *{GUNFIGHTERS"

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KENNEDY BLUE:
THE LOST PAGES

Well, Millermaniacs, here it is, as promised -- a true-blue "FOR YOUR EYES ONLY " first: the few remaining pages of Rex's "shit-canned" radio novel, Kennedy Blue! When he dumped the entire text, somehow, fortunately for us, these last fragments somehow missed the (ill-fated) purging, and Rex,

through a freak accident of pure luck, uncovered these few last-remaining pages among the organized chaos of his ever-frantic office, while he was very kindly helping me with the research and documentation for this book. So, read on, enjoy, and remember -- you saw it first, here!

Pages 144/145:

Priscilla was curious about this creature she'd heard me alluding to and I guess I'd made him sound like pretty much what he was -- a bust-out psychopath of inhuman proportions. She knew nothing about the nature of the Dallas penetration, only that my old outfit was saddling me with a dangerous lunatic for a partner, and she was more worried about my getting snuffed by my own team than the hazards of the mission itself.

"How can you put yourself into that kind of situation? Isn't the outfit the same one that let you guys be shot down in Vietnam--? I mean... to me it sounds as if you have as much to fear from your own partner as you do from whatever you 're

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going to Dallas for."

"He's pure deadly. But they must have offered him something pretty damn sweet or he wouldn't be going in like this again. He didn't snuff the colonel which blows my mind from jumpstreet. I can't figure how they even got him to listen to their bullshit explanations, much less sold it to him. I'd figure him to ice those fuckers first sign of them. But he's happy as a clam so far."

"I hate the sound of this thing you're getting into. What keeps this killer from turning on you?"

"What kept him from turning on any of the spike team? He could have probably taken us all out, a few at a time, if he'd wanted to. Because he'd been offered a shot at doing what it is he really likes. And that is murder on a big scale. Who knows what controls they've ever had on him. Maybe none. But if they've got some better bait to dangle over him -- a more interesting carrot... I think that's how he's going to go. That was the way we all were briefed on him before he was introduced to the spike team. We had individual briefings on various elements of BLADE. And CHAINGANG was a briefing by itself. There were dos and don'ts but they kept assuring us there were controls. He'd have no REASON to turn on us as we were, in effect, helping him achieve precisely what it is he wanted. It worked that way up to a point.

"This time it has a different feel to it. They've set him up for something big. He's in hog heaven just thinking about it and I don't ever want to know what it is. As long as it keeps him cool until -- until I'm clear of it."

"Don't go," she said. Not for the first time. "The money isn't worth it."

"Listen, cupcake, you just let me go get my 800 thou and you and I can go look for an A-frame out in Jackson Hole or somewhere."

"Just make sure this doesn't put YOU in a hole, dammit." She was in a wonderful mood. Well, it's just like the cowboys say, you don't fuck around with love.

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Unnumbered Page:

"just cut off the box-top,
send it in with ten cents in coin,
and then wait for the mailman

to bring you your BIG SURPRISE GIFT
from The Man of Steel!...."

Pages 217/220:

(...) and by that time I was long gone and dreaming sweet dreams, far from the world of Chaingang.

What I wish I could tell you more than anything else was that this story has a happy ending. I would like to tell you that Priscilla and I took my \$800,000 and bought the A-frame out in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, raised a family of 2.7 children, had 1.9 dogs and a cat, went to worship in the church of our choice every week, and lived happily for the rest of our natural lives.

But that is a book or a play or a movie, and this is a story. And what happened is this. Nothing happened. There was no money. There was no Colonel. There was no remnant of USMACVSAUCOG. The people who I managed to reach within the agencies of the intelligence community stonewalled it. Nobody knew anything. The contract was a fantasy. I couldn't even get hold of Johnny Hitt on the landline.

Two weeks were spent in a mad rage of no forwarding addresses and disconnected telephone numbers. And I thought about going back to Dieboldt's house or going to D.C., but I was still weak and very tired, and I knew the house would be

empty, no homicide on Dallas's books, no open doors anywhere. The station had "acting management" and insisted Dieboldt was in Europe, all business being conducted by power-

, of-attorney through Credit Suisse and so on, and so forth, ad

infinitum. And finally I was glad that Priscilla's group insurance at the station covered some of my hospitalization. You know the old gags that begin "I have good news and bad

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news?" Something about how -- your mother-in-law killed herself... that's the good news... the bad news is that she drove off a cliff in your new convertible -- something along those lines. The mission had its last anticlimax with good news and bad news. A grisly little calling card from my old partner. Daniel Edward Flowers Bunkowski.

I hadn't thought of him much since Dallas. I was all caught up in trying to get some of my back pay for all the pain and the strain. It came, as I would have least expected it, in the United States Postal Service's nomenclature "priority first class," and uninsured, shipped from somewhere in Maryland. No return address. A heavy little cardboard box with a bad weight.

Very uncharacteristic of him, but I guess there's no accounting for Chain's sense of humor. After I got the little present which had been addressed to me at the station with the printed admonition "please forward," maybe Daniel didn't get his vacation in paradise that he'd been promised. Maybe it wasn't what it had been cracked up to be. Maybe he was just a little pissed over the whole affair. Who knows, kemo sabe. I know he found them and this was his gift to me and Priscilla.

The colonel had always worn a flashy "elephant ring," a large golden tusker mounted in a field of diamonds, and emeralds, and other precious stones. And Chaingang had sent the ring to Priscilla. I know it was for her because there was a little tag wired to the ring. It had a note, two words printed in heavy pencilled slashmarks: "GOOD SHOT" it said in block letters, wired to the ring. We sold the ring for \$7,000, by the way, and I knew that the ring was something special because you don't sell a ring for that kind of money unless you're in the business or you have a real super goodie. I had to let a 3 karat diamond go once for \$1,500 so I'd been there. So it wasn't such a bummer when we heard the guy we sold it to made a bunch of money on it. We took our 7 and tried to buy some property out near Lake St. Louis, but the real estate man just looked at us like we were crazy. Lots started at \$39,500.

We looked around a little more and never could find any ground we liked that we could afford.

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I'd always had this blackjack system that I knew would line my pockets with gold if I'd just give it a shot. I'd always won money gambling. So I took what was left after paying a few bills and left it with a couple of the casinos out in Nevada. Blew the whole thing on my flawless blackjack system. Wouldn't you know?

It ended like it began. Another queasy anticlimax. Just like when I finally recalled that LSD-insight, you remember -- my Great Acid Truth that revealed itself to me in a lightning bolt of clarity? I expected this to be some secret key that would unlock the universal mysteries for me. All it was was a pitiful piece of nothingness. I'm ready for a humongous hidden truism to assert itself, one of those wise catchphrases like "the only GOOD Comanche is a DEAD Comanche" -- or whatever

some epigrammatic gem that will help me get my life in shape. I finally remember. Get this: this was my big secret -- "FOREVER... IS A LONG TIME."

Right. Exactly. That was MY reaction, too. I go -- oh, no kidding. That's what I wanted to run out and carve in stone? Forever is a long time? Um hmmmmmm. That fucking acid will do it every time. Give you some spoofus sporium in your serious jim-jams, not to mention the rockin' pneumonia and the boogie woogie flu. NEVER do any more acid.

Almost forgot. There was something else in the box and that part of the gift was just for me. I won't tell you what it was. Why spoil you day. It didn't make me happy. That in itself was a gift, I guess, just learning once and for all that vengeance wasn't worth shit. It mad me gag, and then it just made me feel real tired. I dumped it fast before it started to stink right through the plastic.

Let's just say that it was Chaingang 's way of telling me that he'd found the hooded cobra and that he'd let the colonel share HIS little secret -- that payback really was a mother fucker. I mean there is some folks you just don't get over on, hear me?